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THE SECRET OF SAINT FLOREL.

CHAPTER I.

"I'll tell you what, Bryant; I don't half like this fellow Holson. There's something queer about him. These mysterious comings and goings of his may be an everyday matter in these parts, but in an ordinary Englishman I call 'em deuced odd!" And Hugh Strong lit a cigar while waiting for his companion's answer which was not immediately forthcoming.

"I don't know," replied the other, after a pause, in a deep and deliberate voice. "He's treated us hospitably enough; and if he chooses to go away for a day or two every now and then, he has a perfect right to do as he pleases. It's not for us to grumble. Moreover, I heard a very simple explanation of his fondness for looking after his property down at Saint Florel."

"Well! What did you hear?" inquired Strong eagerly.

"Calm yourself, my dear fellow; it was something ordinary enough. There dwells at Saint Florel a certain Creole lady of considerable personal attractions."

"Oh," said Hugh in a disappointed tone, "is that all? Well, I don't admire the lady's taste. Holson looks like a gaol-bird."

"He's not handsome, I admit," replied Strong.

turned Bryant; "and like yourself I'm not particularly attracted to him. However, if it hadn't been for him we shouldn't have seen anything of the island, and it's worth seeing," he concluded, waving his cigar towards the landscape that lay stretched around and below.

It was indeed worth seeing. The two friends were sitting over their after-dinner tobacco on the verandah of a country-house among the mountains of the Island of Réunion. The dwelling was perched upon a wide natural ledge or shelf, behind which the wooded heights towered upwards, while the steep fell away in front to the winding valley below. The moon was just rising, and her faint silvery beams, struggling through the evening mists, made the dim solitudes around yet more mysterious. The rainy season had just begun by several hours' steady downfall; but, as evening came on, the clouds had dispersed, and no showers obscured the waxing brilliance of the moon that was slowly climbing up her starry road to the zenith. Mountain rose behind mountain, and peak beyond peak soared skywards, till the landscape resembled a sea whose irregular and fantastic billows had been suddenly petrified. In the craggy hollows below, and among the dusky

summits of the wooded slopes, wreaths of mist were rising and floating above the blackness of the unseen, like ghosts that, pale and shapeless, seemed condemned to linger for ever in shadowed regions beyond reach of the moon.

The scent of jasmine and roses came in heavy waves of fragrance from the garden; below in the valley the waters of a rapid torrent, swollen by the afternoon's rain, fretted and chafed against gray boulders, with a roar softened to music by the distance. There was no discordant sound abroad, save the groaning of the Indian cook as he kneaded his bread in the bakery behind the house: and this curious and quite unnecessary noise jarred, it must be confessed, with the cheerful chirping of the crickets and the rush of the torrent. Strong, who was enjoying the view and the coolness with that capacity for appreciation which proceeds from a well-digested dinner, began to feel irritated, and removed his cigar the better to express his disapprobation.

"Hang the fellow!" he cried impatiently. "Why in the world should he start his confounded moaning just now? It's like that hymn about 'Every prospect pleases, and only man is vile.'"

"Still it's his way of going to work," answered Bryant. "You may not admire his proceedings just at present, but you'd look rather blank if there was no bread for breakfast."

A louder howl from the bakery put an additional point to his discourse, and so disgusted his companion that the latter arose, with an expression not loud but deep, and set off in the direction of the kitchen, a crazy building, half concealed among rose-bushes, whose locality was betrayed by a ray of yellow light streaming through a hole in the window-shutter. Dozens of moths fluttered away from the light as Strong approached, and a half-wild

cat fled up the nearest tree. As he opened the door the heat presented a sufficiently unpleasant contrast to the coolness of the garden. The floor was of mud, and the tables, which had not known a scrubbing-brush for many a day, were utilised also as seats, for a stalwart Indian, naked save for a loin-cloth, was placidly smoking upon one, while the other was encumbered with a pile of unwashed plates and dishes. Cacao, the smoker, hummed a native air as he sent the blue clouds curling upwards, and watched his subordinate's exertions with much complacency. Chocolat, whose toilet was as simple as that of his companion, stooped over a wooden trough in which lay the mass of dough for the morrow's provision of bread. The beads of perspiration trickled down his face as he rolled and kneaded, while keeping up a series of low howls and groans which must have been emitted for personal encouragement, inasmuch as they were totally needless from any other point of view.

Cacao and Chocolat were both warred to speak English, so Hugh Strong began at once. "Chocolat, my good fellow, what are you making such a noise about?"

"Makee bread," answered Chocolat, smiling till every tooth in his head was visible, and gladly desisting from his toil for a little conversation.

"But you needn't also make such a row."

"Master angry when come in morning, no find bread ready."

"But surely you can make the bread without howling as though you were being thrashed."

"Master angry if no bread," repeated Chocolat with an unmoved smile.

Here Cacao, who had listened with some interest, intervened with an explanation. "All Indian make same noise when him work; what you call

de fashion," he concluded with a grin that matched Chocolat's.

"Well, look here," said Strong, impatiently, "if you two can keep away from the fashion, as you call it, for the next two hours, I'll make it worth your while; your noise is a beastly nuisance. By the way, what time is your master coming back to-morrow? Where has he gone?"

"Gone Saint Florel, look after cane-fields there. Come early in morning for breakfast," replied Cacao.

Hugh shut the kitchen door and turned again across the moonlit garden. Before he had gone more than twenty yards, however, there was heard a dull ponderous thud as of the distant fall of some enormous weight. The ground seemed for a second to vibrate with the shock, while far below in the valley a heavy continuous echo rolled along the ravines muttering into silence as it sank and died away among their furthest recesses. Some strangely generated current of air seemed at work among the floating mists, which were shaken and agitated, gathering for a second into closer wreaths, then eddying and dispersing, and finally accumulating again as before.

The whole occurrence was over almost before Strong realised that anything unusual had happened. The moonlight still shone brightly, not a breath stirred the air, and he might have deemed the whole thing a matter of imagination, had not Bryant hurried across the grass towards him at the same moment that Cacao and Chocolat came flying from the kitchen, their bare feet almost noiseless on the gravel path.

The two Englishmen looked at each other. "Good Heavens, what was that?" said Bryant. "What could it have been?" echoed Strong; and they both turned simultaneously to the Indians, whose dusky faces were

almost ashen with fear and looked ghastly in the moonlight. "What was it?" asked both Englishmen together.

"Big rock tumble," suggested Cacao, as distinctly as his chattering teeth would allow, while Chocolat's trembling lips formulated a still more startling alternative: "Tink de debbil about to-night."

"Nonsense," said Bryant, who was the first to recover his composure. "It's certainly not the devil, and I don't see how it could have been a rock either; the sound wasn't sharp enough. It sounded more like a gigantic feather-bed. I've been among the Alps, and if I had heard that noise in Switzerland I should have said it was an avalanche. There's no snow here," he concluded in a puzzled tone.

"No," said Hugh Strong, with a sudden inspiration; "there's no snow, but there's plenty of earth. That was a landslip, Bryant!"

"By Jove!" said the other, "I believe you're right, Strong. Well, it's a sufficiently startling business. We can't see or hear anything to-night. No doubt Holson will bring us news when he returns in the morning; that is, if it has happened anywhere in his direction. Now I vote for another cigar, and then we'll turn in."

They strolled again towards the verandah, whose wooden supports were all wreathed with stephanotis, and sat themselves down in the two luxurious arm-chairs which they had so lately vacated. Perhaps, though neither of them would have liked to confess it, the nerves of both were slightly shaken.

"When shall we clear, old fellow?" said Strong, when the cigars were well alight.

"Whenever you like," answered the other.

"We've been here nearly a month, you see," went on his companion, "and

we'd better not miss the next Messagerie boat. I'm glad we fell in with Holson, though I don't like him. We've seen some fine scenery, even though the shooting is nothing to speak of; and on the whole I think we did well to accept his invitation. Still, your health's all right now, Bryant, thanks to our year's travelling, and as far as that goes we've no excuse for stopping away any longer. So I vote for the next boat home. We'll tell Holson when he returns to-morrow."

"All right," said Bryant; "I'm your man. We'll go by next boat;" and then they went to bed.

They ate their breakfast next morning without their host, who had apparently been detained at his sugar-factory. It was not until a Creole merchant arrived to see him on business that Anthony Holson's prolonged absence caused any uneasiness to his guests. It being then afternoon and the Creole tired of waiting, Chocolat volunteered to run to Saint Florel and see what had become of his master. In two hours or so, by taking short cuts, he assured Bryant, he would be well on his way home again.

"Chocolat know dese parts," Cacao confided to Hugh Strong. "He got wife and lot o' baby at Saint Florel, so know all 'bout it."

The Indian, however, seemed to have over-rated his walking powers, for five o'clock came, and six, and there were still no signs of his return. As they sat down to a meal, which owing to Chocolat's absence could only be called dinner by courtesy, both Bryant and Hugh Strong were beginning to feel a sense of impending calamity. As there was still some faint daylight left when they had finished, the two friends with one accord took the path along which Chocolat ought to have returned, and strolled along it for a short distance

to see if any signs of the messenger were visible. They were just thinking that it would be wiser to turn back on account of the increasing darkness when Hugh made a dart forward and closely inspected a seated figure by the road-side which he thought he recognised. "Why," he cried in amazement, "it's Chocolat!"

Chocolat it was, sure enough. He sat in a kind of dejected stupor at the foot of a loquat tree. His clothes were torn and disarranged, his face scratched and swollen, and his feet bleeding. As the Englishmen approached, he merely raised his head and looked at them with a dazed and unseeing expression of face.

"What's the matter?" said Bryant. "What has happened? Speak, man, can't you?"

But Chocolat only shook his head and seemed unable to utter a word.

"Chocolat," said Hugh very slowly and distinctly, trying his infallible resource, "tell us what has happened, and I'll give you a dollar. Have you been to Saint Florel?"

"Yes,—no,—yes," said Chocolat mechanically.

"Well, which?" said Bryant. "Did you go, or did you not go?"

"I went, yes,—no, I did not go," answered Chocolat in the same dazed fashion.

"Let's get him home," said Hugh. "Perhaps Cacao can get his tale out of him; but I'm afraid, Bryant, that something very serious has happened. I have a strong impression that we shall not see Holson again."

Between them they dragged the wretched Chocolat upright; but when he attempted to walk he was in such evident pain that Bryant examined his feet, which were cut and bleeding as by sharp stones. He improvised a bandage with a pocket-handkerchief, and then, each taking an arm, the two friends between them supported the

Indian home, a haven which was reached in darkness far too great to be comfortable. Cacao met them at the gate with a lantern, and seeing his brother in such a plight gave a shout of astonishment. Chocolat fell into his relation's supporting arms with a cry of genuine grief; and then ensued a rapid, and, as it appeared to the impatient Englishmen, an interminable conversation in their native tongue between the two Indians.

"Well, what does he say?" inquired Hugh, when at last a slight pause occurred in the narrative.

"Saint Florel's gone!" said Cacao, looking up in affright.

"Gone?" ejaculated Bryant. "What nonsense!"

"Chocolat can't find it," persisted Cacao.

"He must have taken the wrong road," said Bryant.

"No, no," cried Cacao. "Chocolat know road all quite right; he go little way, take good road, rub eye, can't see, rub again, no Saint Florel, no nothing,—nothing at all,—all gone!"

Bryant looked at Hugh, who pursed up his mouth into whistling shape, but made no sound. Bryant turned again to Cacao, who was standing there in a complete state of bewilderment, while poor Chocolat, bereft, like Macduff, of all his family at one fell swoop, sat upon the ground and wept bitterly.

"Try and make me understand," said Bryant. "Do you really mean to say that Chocolat can't see Saint Florel anywhere?"

"He go," explained Cacao, "and go and go, very far, up mountain; then take right road over top; turn round where big rocks are, and all gone: no big hill where used to be; no hole where used to be; no nothing at all."

"Then where is Saint Florel?" per-

sisted Bryant. "It must be somewhere, man."

"Spect he buried under ground. Everything tumble on top," answered Cacao.

"Then where's your master?"

"Spect he buried too."

"Then what are we to do?"

"Don't know."

"Here's a pretty business," said Hugh, who had been listening attentively. "Are we supposed to take charge of this house and all Holson's belongings till somebody turns up to do something?"

"Better send down word to the Consul," said Bryant.

"Let us go over to-morrow to where Saint Florel was," said Hugh. "It will be an interesting sight, though I suppose nothing can be done in the way of rescue."

"Very well," said Bryant; "and now to bed."

CHAPTER II.

NEXT morning the two friends set off accompanied by both servants. The path, a mere track, led over mountains and along valleys, winding in all sorts of unexpected directions. The sun was hot, the air clear and warm; exquisite ferns clung against the bare gray rocks, or nestled in sheltered and stony hollows; the wild raspberries shone upon their pale green stems in dazzling flashes of scarlet, while the whole ground was carpeted with alpine strawberries. The great purple mountain's flanks, and distant rosy peaks, soared above the lowest clouds so that their farther ranges seemed suspended in the air. Here and there, where the precipitous nature of the ground had yielded for a moment to some gentler influence and afforded a few spare yards of comparative level, an Indian had planted manioc, or potatoes, or maize,

the vivid emerald green of the latter's springing sheathes being visible for a long distance and enabling the traveller to guess where a human habitation might be found.

When they had been walking for at least a couple of hours Chocolat, who was a few yards ahead, paused and made them a sign to come forward. The track rose at this particular spot, and when they stood beside Chocolat, both recoiled at the complete and overwhelming nature of the catastrophe.

The point upon which they were standing was the summit of a hill, and in the ordinary course of things the path would here have begun to descend. A rock, however, whose stony mass was visible, though half buried, several yards further down, had slipped from its foundations and carried with it an immense quantity of earth; for the end of the path, broken off short, was literally overhanging a newly formed precipice, and an enormous hollow lay beneath their feet, partially filled up with the fallen earth.

It would have been difficult to picture a more extraordinary scene of desolation than the one which now met their eyes. Saint Florel had been a little village of about a dozen houses, whose inhabitants supported themselves by cultivating vegetables or working in the patch of ground devoted to sugar-cane. But now there was no sign of life visible for miles round, no trace of human dwelling or cultivation. Some force of nature, either a sudden shock of earthquake, or the undermining influence of water, had loosened the overhanging mass of rock-bound soil that rose above it; and in one quick and horrible moment all life of man and plant had been crushed and extinguished for ever. There lay before the travellers a vast mass of freshly turned soil, stretching

downwards till it covered the little stream in the valley whose course for many yards was completely choked. Blade and leaf and frond clothed the nakedness of the rocks and stony landscape round, softening all sharp and rugged lines, spreading a growth of tender verdure over the steep sides of the hills, and shrinking in more fertile hollows into patches of intenser green. But here before them lay what seemed some hideous scar on the fair and spacious bosom of nature; a gaping and cruel wound that marred her loveliness.

They stood and gazed at this desolation for some moments; the thought of all those fellow-creatures lying buried beyond hope of rescue was present to both, and neither felt inclined to speak, until Bryant broke the silence. "Do you see," he said to Strong, "just where the edge of the shock has come? Down there is quite a large tree that has been left upright though its roots are bare; and close beside it a *palmiste* has been snapped off for half its length."

As he mentioned the *palmiste*, Chocolat stepped forward and gazed attentively down the ravine.

"What are you looking for?" asked Strong.

"Only one *palmiste* in Saint Florel," answered Chocolat; "in Mam'selle Julie's garden. Must have been there," he concluded, indicating with his finger a spot close to the boundary of the landslip's effect.

"Who was Mam'selle Julie?" inquired Bryant.

"She Master's friend. Much pretty, beautiful," replied Cacao. "Master stay there always in Saint Florel."

"How would it be," suggested Hugh, "to scramble down and dig a bit round that *palmiste*? If Holson was there the night before last, we may find proof of his death."

Bryant was looking thoughtfully

round as his companion spoke. "I have never been in Saint Florel before," he said, "but from the appearance of the neighbourhood, I should imagine that this peril has been impending for years. The village and plantation were evidently in a hollow, steeply overhung by a bluff, on the remains of which we are standing; the earth and rocks of the bluff simply dropped into the hole below them, and filled it up. You see the chief shock has been in one place, the deepest part of the hollow, the central space under the bluff; there are thousands of tons of earth there. The place is filled up; but the sides of the hollow have not nearly as much stuff over them. You see that *palmiste* tree, which must have been quite on the edge of the rising ground, has merely been snapped not buried. There may only be a few feet of earth above the virginal level there, and we can dig if you like, on the chance of finding something to re-bury; but I think it's a forlorn hope. There's no need to go on long."

Making their way accordingly down to a lower level they were soon at the spot indicated. It lay on the extreme edge of the track of the landslip, and far removed from that part of the mountain side which had received the greatest weight of earth. The *palmiste*, snapped off for half its height, stood like a house-pole above the desolate earth. The disturbance had been comparatively slight in this direction, and only a small quantity of the rich reddish soil, which had poured like a torrent over the luckless hamlet of Saint Florel, had been dispersed hereabouts. For a few minutes they looked at the scene in silence, their unwillingness to begin exploring being caused not by inhumanity, but by a natural reluctance to expose what might possibly prove some terrible spectacle.

The two Indians had brought spades in case they might be required, and now carefully following Bryant's directions they began lifting the damp caked earth in slices. It appeared to be here so shallow, that vertical digging would have defeated its object. The men worked steadily on, and in a very few minutes Chocolat's spade, as he lifted a layer of earth, had a damp white fold clinging round it. They all pressed eagerly forward, and clearing the mould with their hands found that it belonged to the corpse of some woman. Soon soft dark hair was disclosed, and before long the body lying face downwards was exposed to the light.

"That Mam'selle Julie, right enuff," said Cacao.

"Why should she belying on her face now?" said Bryant in a puzzled tone. "I don't believe there was enough weight of earth upon her to prevent her getting up again."

"Perhaps some falling stone struck her from behind," suggested Strong. "Where was her house, Chocolat?"

"Down further from *palmiste*, much slope," answered the Indian. "Can't tell where now; everything lost."

"Well," said Strong, "I suppose we had better lift the poor soul aside and bury her decently somewhere."

They all four stooped and very gently turned the corpse over upon its back, but no sooner had they done so than they simultaneously started away. Having lain on her face the woman's dress in front had taken little or no harm; it was scarcely soiled by its contact with the damp earth, but a ghastlier stain defiled its whiteness, for its folds over her bosom showed a dark patch of blood. It was not, however, from this that they all shrank, though it was sufficiently horrible; it was from the dead face, white and fixed in a look of pain and terror impossible to describe. The dust-covered

eyes were wide open, and the faded lips parted as if in a prayer for help or mercy, while the beautiful waxen fingers of one hand lay rigid upon her breast and dyed with the same stain.

"One can understand now why she did not escape," said Hugh, as soon as the first fascination of horror was past.

"Yes," answered Bryant slowly; "she must have been murdered just as that mass came rolling down. Apparently she was in her garden, and at some little distance from the house. Lift her aside under that bush till we can bury her."

Hugh and the two Indians accordingly raised the corpse and bore it to a short distance. Bryant, who remained on the spot, presently stooped, and picking up some small object thrust it into his pocket before the others returned. They now continued their search, but an hour's labour convinced them of the futility of further work, for the soil, slipped down from above, grew all at once much deeper, a fact which proved that there had been a sudden hollow in the original surface. Any attempt to explore to such a depth was clearly hopeless, so, abandoning the task, they dug a grave for the murdered woman. By the time she was decently buried the sun was well on his way down the sky, and they set off homewards with abundant food for reflection.

Cacao and Chocolat conversed a good deal in their native tongue, but the Englishmen only broke the silence with an occasional brief remark. Both were in reality occupied in speculations as to the murderer, and their mental conclusions were the same. Arrived at the house, Bryant ordered the servants at once to prepare a meal, and then, drawing Strong into his own room, brought from his pocket the object he had found at Saint Florel. Strong made an exclamation at sight

of the knife. "Where did you find it?" he asked.

"Close to the body of the woman," answered Bryant; "only then it was open, and I had to shut it to get it into my pocket. Look here," and he opened the blade. In spite of the rust and mould which adhered to it, the knife was clearly stained with blood; and on its haft was the monogram A. H.

"As I thought," said Strong.

Bryant did not answer, only laying the knife upon the table, with a feeling of relief that it was no longer in his pocket.

"What's to be done?" inquired Strong.

"I don't see that anything can be done," replied Bryant. "Holson is probably expiating his crime under several tons of earth; and if he were alive and well at this moment no one could produce a single witness against him, even if he were charged. The knife is only circumstantial evidence after all, and that, I take it, doesn't count."

"But I suppose we must send word to the Consulate."

"Yes, I suppose so," answered Bryant; "but I wish we'd cleared out of this before all these awful things happened. I hate being mixed up in such matters," he concluded almost irritably, feeling his nerves somewhat shaken, and feeling also a true English objection to exhibiting the least emotion.

"I'll tell you what Bryant," said Hugh Strong: "I don't see how we can possibly write to the Consul in a satisfactory way about all this. It will be much better to explain things personally, and as we both want to go off by the next boat I think we'll start for Saint Denis a little sooner. I'm not particularly superstitious, but I do not care to stay in this place any longer than I can help."

"Well," answered Bryant in his deliberate fashion, "I think it's a good plan; we will start to-morrow."

They carried out their programme and left the little house among the mountains next day with a considerable feeling of relief. Their troubles in connection with the unpleasant occurrences of the past few days were by no means over, for when the Consul heard their tale, he looked exceedingly grave. "The French police must be at once informed," he said; "and I fear, gentlemen, that you must be content to remain here for another month, in case this man Holson is found, when you will be required as witnesses. Of course he may be buried under the landslip, or he may very possibly never have committed that murder at all; in any case the evidence appears to me to be purely circumstantial. Personally I do not think it at all likely that Holson has escaped; if he committed that murder he need scarcely have run away, seeing the landslip covered up his misdeeds, or seeing, at any rate, that he might easily fancy it had done so. He may possibly have stabbed the woman in a fit of rage or jealousy; they two were very likely the only creatures awake in Saint Florel after nine o'clock, for these Indian labourers sleep early. She would have been quite beyond reach of help; but if Holson escaped the landslip, why did he run away? At any rate I must ask you not to take your passages in the next boat until we have heard from the French police."

"Do you know anything of Holson?" inquired Bryant of the Consul.

"Yes; I know something, and it is a sufficiently curious story," was the answer. "Holson landed here three years ago with only a five-pound note in his pocket. I knew the captain of the steamer he came out in, and he told me that Holson had come on

board possessed of a considerable sum, for during the voyage he gambled every night and lost heavily. I first saw him down at the hotel in the town, and I never wish to see such a sight again. He was gambling heart and soul, and looked almost mad; indeed to this day I am not sure whether at times Holson is completely sane. He watched the cards turn up, and clutched his winnings, with the look of some ferocious and persistent animal. The end of it was that he recovered some part of his original capital, and purchased a plot of land that had once been planted with cane, but which had gone out of cultivation. He got it cheap, for the last occupier had died and the owner wanted to get the place off his hands. This was his third year on it; and as he worked the place well it ought to have paid him."

"Holson was English, I suppose?" said Hugh Strong.

"Oh, yes, I believe so," answered the Consul. "He came here from England and spoke like a gentleman. And now you must excuse me for suggesting that I have a lot of work to get through. By the way, has it occurred to either of you that this woman may have committed suicide? Holson was in the habit of spending a good deal of time in her house; he may easily have left his knife behind, and she may have used it against herself."

Bryant looked doubtful at this suggestion, but Hugh Strong shook his head emphatically. "I am sure it is a murder," he said; "and I am sure too that Holson did it."

"Ah, well," said the Consul, "time will perhaps show. This is a wild place, though it is supposed to be civilised, and I fear that more than one murderer is still at large here. If they can, of course, all criminals try and get over to Madagascar;

there is no extradition treaty with that country, and malefactors can enjoy themselves in perfect peace. No one disturbs them. And now for the present I must be busy; but if you care to accept bachelor hospitality, give me the pleasure of your company at dinner to-night. My wife is away up at our cottage among the mountains, but if you will excuse shortcomings, I shall be delighted to see you. I have a nephew here who arrived a week or two ago from Mauritius. He is going to Madagascar in a few days to take charge of the English hospital at Antananarivo, and then to travel for botanising; so we shall be a regular English party; a real treat in these regions, I assure you."

CHAPTER III.

It is needless to say that both Bryant and his friend accepted this invitation, and spent, in consequence, a very pleasant evening. Frank Dalgleish, the medical nephew, was as lively and entertaining a companion as a young gentleman of twenty-three, with high spirits and a turn for fun, can well be; and the Consul was the very soul of hospitality. Of course the conversation drifted in the direction of the landslip and supposed murder.

"What time did you hear the earthquake, or whatever it was?" inquired the Consul.

"It was just ten," replied Bryant, "for I looked at my watch."

"Of course one has no means of judging when the woman was actually killed," said the Consul, "but I do not think that any Indian in Saint Florel could have been awake much later than nine, or even half-past eight. Work in the cane-plantations begins early, and the labourers go to bed with the sun. If Holson killed that woman an hour before the land-

slip occurred, no one in the village might have been any the wiser. She may have died almost instantly, and had no time to give any alarm."

"But if she was murdered an hour before an unexpected landslip, why did the murderer take no pains to conceal his crime?" inquired Frank.

"Ah, that is just the point," returned his uncle. "At present the whole affair is a mystery, and rather an interesting one. Holson may have lingered about Saint Florel and afterwards been overwhelmed by the landslip. Personally I think the deed must have been done almost at the same moment as the earth came down; only then the two corpses would have been found close together."

"Chocolat, Holson's Indian servant, knew all about the place; his wife lived on the estate, I believe," said Strong; "and he told us that the Creole woman's house was at the bottom of her garden, as it were. According to him the *palmiste* tree was at its furthest boundary, and the ground from that tree sloped very steeply and suddenly towards the house. When we began digging, a little beyond where the corpse was found, we could see at once how much deeper the fresh earth had fallen. It seems almost a miracle that the body was ever found."

"Murder will sometimes out," observed the Consul; "but I fear in this instance nothing more will be discovered. Holson's body must be buried somewhere near his victim's."

The next few days, which Bryant and Hugh Strong were compelled to spend in Saint Denis, would have been dull enough but for the company of Frank Dalgleish, who insisted upon dragging them about the town to see everything of the slightest interest. He enjoyed his own sight-seeing with a light-hearted gaiety that proved infectious, and the three became ex-

cellent friends. Of course both Strong and Bryant were requested by the French authorities to postpone their departure in case of their attendance as witnesses being required. In the meantime they amused themselves as best they could, and became cynosures in the eyes of the Creole women of Saint Denis.

Time, however, brought no news of the missing man. The police scoured the mountainous districts, and all vessels leaving the ports were watched; no one, however, in the least resembling Holson had been seen or heard of, and the excitement of his pursuit died away under the universal impression that the murderer had expiated his crime under the landslip. His personal possessions were brought down to the Consulate, and the Consul, after investigating his private papers and despatch-box, found the address to which the latter should be sent. "If you and your friend are going straight back to England," he said, "you would put me under the greatest obligation if you would take charge of the parcel of papers and things I have sorted out to be returned to Holson's relatives. Would it be much trouble to despatch them by registered parcel? The address is Denehurst, Coltham, Sussex."

"I live in Devonshire," said Hugh Strong, to whom the request was addressed, "but I know Sussex well enough. I shall be delighted to do anything I can in the matter, and take them myself."

"Very well," said the Consul; "here is the parcel; you see it is not a large one. There is nothing of value enough to send to the Treasury that I can find except memoranda relating to the title-deeds of the estate called Denehurst, which will probably be useful to any member of the family. This is the only attractive thing I have seen, and it's pretty enough,

isn't it?" and he held out a leather case closing with a snap.

It contained the miniature of a young girl, fair-haired and blue-eyed, with a gentle dreamy expression, and a dawning smile upon her lips. There was a grace and charm about the picture suggestive of unconsciousness on the part of the sitter; either the portrait had been taken secretly, or the girl must have united the simplicity of childhood to the sweetness of maturer years. The face was neither arch, nor clever, nor intellectual; it was "pure womanly"; the delicate features bore the stamp of rare beauty, and the large eyes under their pencilled brows gazed at the spectator with infantine gravity and innocence.

"By George!" said Hugh Strong, as he laid the miniature down after looking his fill, which, being an impressionable young man, took some time. "By George, that's something worth looking at!" and he promptly took up the portrait again.

"A very attractive girl," was Bryant's more seasoned judgment, which however his friend did not receive with favour. "Is that all you can find to say?" he asked indignantly. "Why, it's the most beautiful face I ever saw in my life. She is a most lovely creature. I wonder what was Holson's connection with her; there is no likeness that I can see."

"Perhaps she is, or was, his wife," suggested Bryant.

Hugh's face fell. "I never thought of that!" he cried. "But I can't believe a woman who looked like that would ever marry such a man."

"Women do strange things sometimes," said his friend; and then the miniature was returned to its case, and the brown paper parcel consigned to the safe till the mail was due.

"You're evidently hard hit," observed Frank Dalglish laughingly to

Strong. "Your best plan is to go straight to Denehurst, introduce yourself, and marry that charming widow. I'll be best man at the wedding, and marry the head-bridesmaid. But now, if you have sufficiently admired your lady-love, I vote we go for a stroll. The air is getting cool now, and the day after to-morrow, as you know, I depart from this hospitable shore to shed the light of medical science upon the gentle Malagache; therefore we may as well enjoy as much of each other's company as we can."

In a few days the two Englishmen started for Europe once more, seeing the lovely shores of Réunion grow fainter and fainter while the steamer plunged forward. As the flower-decked town faded out of sight both Bryant and his friend experienced a sense of relief.

"A pretty place," said Hugh, "but I never should care to see it again. One seems to have been living under the shadow of a crime lately; and now for England, home——"

"And beauty," suggested Bryant expressively. "I observe, Strong, that you have stuck like wax to that brown-paper parcel. In point of age I have the advantage of you, and I might reasonably suggest that I am fitter to take care of it than you. However, my dear boy, I will refrain, and leave you the joy of carrying about a miniature which you are dying to look at, sealed up in a packet which you dare not open."

It was June when they again reached England, and perfect June weather; and it is needless to say that to the two travellers the hawthorn-decked hedgerows of their native country were more beautiful than all the gorgeous blossoms of the tropics. Bryant, a rather solitary man with few relations or friends, betook himself at

once to a favourite bachelors' hotel in Jermyn Street, while Hugh Strong disappeared temporarily under an avalanche of greetings from various sisters, cousins, and aunts.

In a few days, however, which Bryant spent in tasting all the delights of a return to the most comfortable of clubs, Hugh suddenly appeared in Jermyn Street. "I say, old fellow," he cried. "That parcel! I had nearly forgotten about it. The Consul said I could send it as a registered packet, but I've half a mind to deliver it personally. It would be an act of civility, and it may also prove a bit of a lark. Pack up your things, and we'll run down to Coltham together for a couple of nights."

"I was just beginning to feel comfortably settled at home again," began Bryant; "but I own to a certain curiosity as to Holson's belongings; so I'll come."

Coltham, they were told at the station, did not boast of a railway communication, and they were therefore directed to book to Redford, whence they must make their way as best they could to their destination.

"Where we are going to Heaven only knows," grumbled Bryant, as he seated himself in a smoking-carriage. "Coltham may be miles away from this station at Redford, and for anything I know we may be reduced to the carrier's cart. This comes of being too inquisitive about other people's relatives. I wish I'd stayed in Jermyn Street," he concluded, for rural solitudes had few charms for him, and the realised comforts of his club presented themselves vividly to his imagination at the moment.

"Never mind," said Hugh; "you'll feel quite happy by and by. To-morrow's Sunday, too, and always a beastly day in London."

"I know very well what you're

driving at," replied his friend; "you want to try and see that girl whose picture you were so taken with. How do you know she lives at this place, Denehurst, at all? She may be in the Antipodes."

"Well, never mind the girl," said Hugh rather shamefacedly. "If she is there, I shall have the pleasure of seeing her in the flesh; and if not, it can't be helped."

Redford proved as barren of vehicles that afternoon as Bryant had prophesied, and, after finding that their luggage could be sent on by an empty cart that was returning to Coltham, they set off stoutly on their five-mile walk.

They were an oddly assorted pair: Hugh Strong, aged twenty-five, tall and broad-shouldered, with a frank face and genial smile; James Bryant, short in stature, nearly ten years older, inclined to stoutness, as deliberate as the other was impulsive, and as even-tempered as Hugh was impetuous. Bryant was a bit of a cynic moreover, while his friend was a confirmed optimist, and possessed a prudence and foresight for which Hugh had no corresponding qualities. The two had an occasional and amiable difference; but during a long friendship they had never had a serious quarrel.

They plodded along without much conversation, till it suddenly occurred to Hugh to ask a question. "I say, Bryant," he began, "do you suppose this man, this Dennis Dene, to whom the parcel is addressed, has any idea of the fact that Holson is supposed to be a murderer?"

"Don't know," returned Bryant.

"The Consul wrote home as soon as we sent word, I know; but I haven't the slightest idea whether he ever said anything about that little circumstance. I don't think he knew soon enough; it is most awkward."

"Silence is golden; follow that rule," quoth Bryant. "What a length this road is. How can people bury themselves in such a place?"

The road fortunately did not prove so interminable as Bryant feared, and Coltham, an insignificant but picturesque little hamlet, was soon reached. It boasted a clean, if humble inn, whose modest hospitality they both appreciated. The landlord too was voluble, and from him they learned several particulars about the family at Denehurst. "Old Mr. Dennis Dene was Mr. Anthony Holson's uncle," he said. "He never comes out of the park now, and not often as far as the gate. An invalid they call him, but I think he's a bit touched here," he concluded, tapping his forehead significantly.

"Does old Mr. Dene live alone then?" inquired Hugh.

"No, no, there's a nephew with him, his sister's son, Mason Sawbridge, a poor crooked fellow that nobody likes. He and Mr. Anthony were cousins, sister's sons; and then there's Miss Phoebe."

"And who is Miss Phoebe?" demanded the irrepressible Hugh.

"She was Mr. Anthony's cousin too. He, and Mason Sawbridge and Miss Phoebe were old Mr. Dene's sisters' children. He had three sisters; two, I've heard tell, ran away from home to be married, and got a bad bargain in husbands; that was Mr. Mason's mother and Miss Phoebe's. Mr. Anthony Holson's got a good fortune from his family, but Mr. Dene was guardian to all three. Eh, dear! I can remember when Denehurst was a very different place, but now it's nearly in ruins. There's just enough for those that are there to live upon, and that's all. In Lady Lucilla's time, fifteen years ago, things were very different."

"Who was Lady Lucilla?" inquired Hugh.

"Old Mr. Dene's wife, and a real beauty. There was no one to match her in these parts. They tell a queer story of her marriage. Old Mr. Dene was a terrible one after cards and dicing and such like, when he was young, and lost a lot of money one way and another; and they say that Lady Lucilla married him on condition he never touched a card or gambled again. He kept his promise while she lived; but when she died he was nigh crazy with trouble and began at the same thing again. I've heard tell he's lost pretty nigh everything, but no one rightly knows who things belong to now. Lord! There was a great long room at Denehurst all decked with carved oak, and pictures as thick as flies on the walls, all in gilt frames. They say all those have gone too now, but no one knows the rights of the story. Old Parkins, the butler up at Denehurst, never says anything that a man can get hold of by way of news; the pints of good ale I've stood him, the last six or seven year, and never a word to talk over in the tap-room by way of return! One is bound to amuse customers, you see," he concluded with a trifle of very natural indignation at Mr. Parkins's reticence.

"Does old Mr. Dene see visitors, then?" asked Bryant, who was beginning to feel that it was now his turn to extract a little information.

"That I don't rightly know," returned the landlord. "But you've only to go along the high road about a quarter of a mile beyond the village, and ring at the big gates. The lodge-keeper then will tell you. I never hear tell of any visitors now at Denehurst. Mr. Mason Sawbridge is master, I believe, since his uncle began to fail."

"And what is Miss Phœbe like?" asked the audacious Hugh.

"Rarely pretty," said the land-

lord, his rather bucolic face kindling into temporary enthusiasm. "Rarely pretty, and kind too; but she seldom comes out of the park except to church. It must be dull for the poor soul, though she's always been fond of wandering about the woods and such-like places. Still, now she's a woman grown she must likely want a bit more change."

"How old is she then?" said Hugh, disregarding a rather malicious chuckle from Bryant.

"She was seventeen when Mr. Anthony went away," said their host. "That's three years since, so she's nigh twenty now or thereabouts."

"And what—" began Hugh.

"Look here," interrupted Bryant, "I think we've sat here long enough for the present. I should like a little fresh air as we are in the country."

"It is close, sir," said the host apologetically, for they were sitting in the tap-room. "You see the tobacco's a bit strong that they get at the shop down the village, and the smell stays about the place somehow."

"However you have the face—" began Bryant, when they were outside and strolling down the little garden at the back of the inn.

"Never mind, never mind, my dear fellow," interrupted Hugh hastily; "don't inflict one of your abominable disquisitions on me just now. I've found out nearly all I wanted to know."

"You'd better ask this man Mason Sawbridge,—what an odd name—to show you the family-tree," said Bryant grimly. "Perhaps a glance at it may complete the information you require."

"That looks likely water for trout, doesn't it?" said Hugh with tact worthy of a woman. He pointed to a narrow but tempting-looking stream that ran at the bottom of the landlord's vegetable patch.

"By Jove, that it does!" answered Bryant with well satisfied looks as his eyes followed the course of the little river's windings. "Why didn't I bring some tackle from town?" If Bryant could be reckoned enthusiastic about anything on earth it was fishing; he was a most earnest devotee of the sport, which coincided with his ideas of enjoyable pleasure. Shooting bored him; hunting he considered too much of an exertion to be really attractive, though he sometimes rode to counteract an inclination to stoutness which gave him some anxiety; but fishing—— Straightway Denehurst and its occupants, the deceased Holson, even Hugh himself disappeared from his mind, and James Bryant beheld himself skilfully whipping a nice-looking stretch of water in the adjoining field, and hooking a three-pounder by dint of the most cunning exertions. He had just mentally landed his prize, and the silvery beauty was gasping on the grass, when Hugh's next remark brought him back to present things once more. "Perhaps old Boniface, or whatever his name is, down at the inn can lend you a rod. He may be a fisherman; there's a mangy-looking fish of some kind under a glass case on my bedroom mantelpiece."

"Country tackle is no good," said Bryant mournfully.

"Write to Farlow then, or Bernard; they know the sort of thing you like, and you can have it down in no time."

"Well, I'll see," said Bryant. "I'll go and ask the landlord whether there is any fish worth catching about here," and he went up the box-edged path to the homely door again.

Left to himself Hugh's face assumed a look of intense satisfaction; he hated fishing himself, but he hated solitude still more. If the proposed call at Denehurst opened any agreeable prospect, he did not intend to hurry away from Coltham, for the picture of the girl found among Holson's things had made more impression on him than he cared to acknowledge. Still Bryant's presence would be a great addition to his own pleasure in the expedition; and if there was any decent fishing to be had, he knew that his friend would not quarrel with his present quarters. Only one doubt remained to mar his hopes. Was the pretty Phoebe up at Denehurst the original of the miniature? However, Hugh was a naturally cheerful individual who always looked on the sunny side of everything, and he presently turned up the path again in the best possible spirits whistling,

Shall I, wasting in despair,
Die because a woman's fair?

(To be continued)

THE NEW MOSAICS AT SAINT PAUL'S.

THE general public are perhaps scarcely aware of the wonderful scheme of decoration which has been carried out at Saint Paul's during the last five years. To say that nothing like it has been attempted during this century is to speak under the mark rather than above it. In the opinion of many competent judges it would be difficult to find either in ancient, medieval, or modern times a more conscientious and artistic piece of work than that which now adorns the cathedral church of our great metropolis.

It is in itself a thing to be proud of, that here we have a genuine bit of English work, designed by an English artist, and wrought by English workmen in material made in England. It carries us back to old times to find an English artist retained by a Dean and Chapter at a fixed salary, to design and execute the decoration of their cathedral as a consecutive work of art. But apart from this, the decoration of Saint Paul's had come to be regarded as one of those insoluble problems at which every new generation would try its hand only to sink back baffled. Not only is there the intrinsic difficulty of dealing with a building of such magnitude; not only does the climate and atmosphere of London add elements of difficulty all their own; but in addition all England, certainly all London, imagines itself to have proprietary rights in Saint Paul's, and almost a claim to be consulted as to its treatment; to say nothing of the fact that every Englishman imagines himself to be a judge of art, and takes his personal tastes to be

the artistic and infallible measure of all things.

Perhaps with these facts in view the authorities at Saint Paul's have proceeded with more than the usual caution of a corporation, and have experienced more than most bodies the overwhelming difficulties which a committee of art can bring to bear on progress. Nearly forty years ago, under the rule of Dean Milman, the project was first mooted, large sums of money were collected, and large sums spent in experiment and tentative designs. And when at last the reredos appeared as the first solid instalment of an attempt to beautify the cathedral, it was nearly swept away in a fanatical outburst, theologians, antiquaries, and architects all putting themselves in evidence as persons who must at least be appeased by any one who wished to decorate Saint Paul's. While this storm was blowing itself out, the work of decorating the cathedral was quietly progressing, in gradual and very spasmodic instalments of mosaic, which, from the designs of various artists and with varying merit, were placed slowly in the eight spandrels of the dome under the auspices of Doctor Salviati of Venice. The boisterous figures of prophet and evangelist, variously engaged and surrounded by angelic ministrants, give at least a flash of colour to the solemn magnificence of the dome as its proportions melt away into the gloom of Thornhill's frescoes, and the eight modern images which look down from their niches on the worshippers below.

In 1891 the zeal for decoration,

which had been sleeping all these years, save for the striking and brilliant exception mentioned above, seems to have burst out into full vigour. Mr. W. B. Richmond then appears on the scene, not by any means, as we are informed, to experiment on a new subject and feel his way to a scheme of decoration, but with the carefully developed plans of an artistic lifetime, with a devotion to Wren's great masterpiece dating from childhood, a thorough knowledge of Italian methods of mosaic work practically studied from the early masters, especially at Ravenna, and with a complete mastery of colour, which in itself is no slight advantage under the peculiar conditions of our foggy atmosphere. Since that time the decoration of Saint Paul's has been a rapid, consecutive, and continuous process. Behind the long lines of scaffolding, planking, and canvas, which have been so irritating to the visitor, and so fatal to the already scanty light which penetrates the cathedral, a small contingent of mosaic workers, under the control of Messrs. Powell of Whitefriars, glass-painters and setters from the same firm, and painters from the firm of McMillan and Houghton have been busily engaged. Those who have attended the choir-offices during these years must have been startled to hear the perpetual snip of the pliers used by the workmen in cutting their *tessere* to the right shape, and occasionally by the fall of a brush or a hammer on the broad scaffolding over their heads. The men have all seemed to take not only an intelligent interest in their work, but to have manifested a real love and enthusiasm for it, which is the more intelligible in a system where every workman, instead of mechanically fixing in his pieces like a child's puzzle, has to judge with something

of an artist's eye the angle in which to set them to the best advantage of light and colour.

The visitor to Saint Paul's will remember that the choir consists of an eastern apse with a sanctuary bay with square openings, now shut off by the reredos. Westward of this it is pierced with three arches, surmounted by a cornice and a frieze which run down each side of the choir. Above this are clerestory windows of the usual classical type, with no tracery or mullions, having on each side a considerable space of a triangular shape. The vaulting of the roof is broken up before it reaches the apse (from which it is separated by a broad stone arch) into three shallow circular domes, supported, it would seem, by twelve pendentives, whose kite-like shape are some of the most prominent surfaces in the church. This description, let it be said, does not aim so much at architectural accuracy, as at reminding the reader of the view which meets his eye as he looks up the choir: he will find its architectural details admirably described in the authorised Guide to the Cathedral by the Rev. Lewis Gilbertson; and he will now, we trust, be in a better position to appreciate the decoration which has covered these bare, yet beautiful, surfaces with a blaze of gold and colour. One word must be said to comfort those who know, perhaps to their cost, the tarnishing powers of the London atmosphere. The *tessere* employed, being of glass, are impervious to these evil influences, and are set in a substance like cement which hardens with age; while the mass of paint, being laid on with wax liquefied by petroleum instead of oil, forms an imperishable surface which is as much part of the stone as if it had been burned into it.

On entering the choir the most

prominent object is the magnificent new reredos, which, stretching across the westernmost end of what used to be the sanctuary, has converted the apse into a chapel, to which we will introduce our readers presently. Running across the frieze of rosso antico in letters of gold, the inscription (the choice of which was little short of an inspiration), *Sic Deus dilexit mundum*, links together the story of the Redemption and the altar in a wonderful harmony. Above this, visible to the extreme west end of the cathedral, we discover the glitter and warm glow of the new mosaics. This is the crowning point of all the decoration of the cathedral, and it required some skill not to produce an anti-climax to the reredos. Here, in the three triangular spaces of the roof as it slopes down to the circle of the apse, each space divided from the other by architectural bands and pierced through a large part of its surface by windows, Mr. Richmond has placed his Last Judgment; a subject which, while almost demanded by the position, allowed him to place on a commanding eminence a majestic figure of Christ, as the crown and glory of the converging lines of decoration. This figure, for which something like forty studies were made, and which, if standing erect, would be fourteen feet in height, has been elaborated with infinite pains. The folds of the light-coloured robe hang in majestic lines, while falling off the shoulders is a cope-like vestment, clasped in front with a jewelled morse and hanging down the back, visible in its inner lining underneath the outstretched arms which, while raised to bless, convey at the same time a suggestion of crucifixion and of intercession. The face, with its marvellous delicacy of expression, marvellous, that is to say, having regard to the material of which it is

composed, was a subject of long and careful study. It was relaid by the workmen more than once, while the artist was running up the scale of expression in the human yet divine face, from the *Rex tremendæ majestatis*, to the *Pie Jesu Domine*, with which Thomas of Celano has made us familiar. The background is filled up by a maze of red wings and gold, significant of Him who comes flying upon the wings of the wind, while beneath Him are the clouds, and the rainbow throne, and the sun turning into darkness and the moon into blood, where the Judge sits crowned with imperial diadem, encircled with the thorns now bursting into flowers. On either side, separated by the dividing ribs of the architecture, yet by a clever trick of decoration almost turned into one surface, is a suggestion, tenderly and beautifully treated, of the reward and doom of the last day.

On the left of the spectator, that is to say, on the right of the throne, two angels, seated on the arch of the window, are scanning a large scroll on which the artist conceives to be inscribed the names of the blessed. Behind stand three other angels, holding in their hands crowns of victory wherewith to adorn those whose names are written on the scroll; while on the left of the throne two others are endeavouring to discover what names are missing, and behind them again are more angels with veiled or averted faces, mourning for those who have failed to attain salvation. The treatment is somewhat novel, and the Byzantine feeling which animates these groups is striking and beautiful, and serves to throw into relief the great central figure. The subject is continued in the three windows below, which are perhaps the least satisfactory portion of the design, as these openings into the light,

in the place which they occupy, are one of the most difficult problems to the artist. They will probably need to be treated again, or in some way adapted. Round the frieze are small figures of virtues mentioned in the book of Revelation, while below runs the great text, *Alleluia, Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus, Alleluia*, which is not so happily chosen as the text of the reredos.

We now turn from the apse to view the decoration of the roof, whose vaulting reaches away to the entrance of the dome. Here the most striking objects are the pendentives which hang sloping forward from the roof, with a surface curved at a peculiar angle, and offering great difficulties to the artist. Each of these carries on a surface of gold a great angel with arms set wide apart, reaching up over the head, encircled with six wings. The attitude of these angels suggests a messenger just alighting with a proclamation from on high, while the outstretched arms give also a sense of support to the circular domes above them, and make them a kind of Christian caryatides. These form a line of beauty along which the eye is carried to the central Christ. Above them the eye is arrested by the three shallow cupolas in which each bay terminates, above the semicircular arches dividing them from each other. In each of these the artist has depicted one of the acts of Creation. In the most eastern cupola, which is above the sanctuary, is represented the creation of the birds. In the centre is a golden sun, round which are flying circles of birds; while round the outer ring runs a silvery stream with a flowery bank, and beyond it rises a range of blue mountains. Springing from the bank are various trees, the olive, the fig, the oak, the quince, the chestnut, and the lemon, while underneath them, with all their wealth of

plumage displayed, are peacocks and waterfowl and kingfishers, the whole exquisitely finished, and to those who have had the privilege of inspecting it closely equal in delicacy to a piece of tapestry. This cupola bears the date A.D. 1892; but we doubt if even the strongest glasses will be able to detect it. In the next cupola, coming west, we have the creation of the inhabitants of the sea. This is deeper in tone and warmer in colour. The centre here again is a sun of glory, round which the spray of the waves has made a magnificent iris. At regular intervals round the outer circle sea-monsters are spouting a delicate stream of silvery water into the blue vault, the soft tones of which lighten up with marvellous delicacy the rush and swirl of the dark waves, through which gambol and dart multitudes of brilliant fish just waking into life. Not one of the least beautiful features in this decoration is the band of scallop shells which surrounds the outer rim. In the third dome, with a firmer touch and stronger outline, we have the creation of the beasts. Here, as before, there is the central sun and flying birds; but the surface below is broken up by palm trees in which sit birds of the parrot-type, and beneath them every sort of beast, except the horse, an exception which we are inclined to deplore. Each of these cupolas is separated by a richly decorated architectural band, in the clothing of which Mr. Richmond has shown his mastery of colour. Instead of indiscriminate gold, which is to painting what a drum is to music, there is a delicate and careful picking out of the decorative features of Wren's work, which a blurr of paint might easily have obliterated; and on the surface facing the eye room has been found for a series of bold, well-chosen texts, which link together the design of the roof.

If we now gaze at the walls which carry the vaulting we are able to see one section completely finished, on the north-east side of the sanctuary, and to realise what the whole will be like when the work is done. Over the arches are two spandrel spaces, making twelve in all, only two of which (these we have indicated above) are as yet completed. In these are represented two warrior angels guarding the sanctuary in an attitude of repose, holding some emblems of the Passion in their hand. These are the first pieces executed of the new mosaic, and, unlike the rest, with two other exceptions, are fixed on pieces of slate cemented into the wall, instead of on the surface of the wall itself. Above these spandrels running the whole length of the choir is a frieze, which has offered more difficulties to the decorator than almost any other part of the design. After long discussion mosaic was chosen in preference to bronze or marble, but even then the choice of subjects was full of difficulty. The first idea will be seen in the long panels east of the reredos, where moving figures have been attempted in the two pieces representing the sea giving up its dead. These, except as a piece of colour, are not very successful, as the confined space and the height from the floor make it difficult to distinguish sufficiently the details of the subject, and the small figures are thrown out of scale by the large forms around them. The design finally adopted is to be seen in that part of the frieze which runs down the choir and terminates above the organ. There, in each bay, we have an arabesque continuation of the subject of the cupola, birds and fish treated decoratively, except in the last, where there are symbolical but finished treatments of Adam and Eve. In the projecting and smaller portions of the frieze there

are carpet-patterns of Persian character, which contain some of the most exquisite though the least pretentious work in the whole scheme; while to prevent them from becoming mere purple patches the stone setting in which they are placed has been decorated with a subdued flush of beautiful arabesque ornament.

Above the frieze are some of the most important parts of the decoration, the large panels on each side of the windows lending themselves to twelve large pictures, of which Mr. Richmond has fully availed himself. The general scheme of subject is as follows: on the north side is represented the general expectancy of the world waiting for a Saviour, whether in Jewish or Gentile history; on the south, the different temple-builders, who in sacred history have realised the place of God's habitation among men.

Beginning at the most eastern panel, on the north side, we see the Delphic Sibyl, listening to the revelation conveyed to her by a messenger who is pointing upwards, as she peers into the roll of futurity. The exquisite ornamentation of the robes and the majestic pose of the figure will be familiar to those who saw the full-sized cartoon exhibited a year or two ago at the New Gallery. On the other side of the window towards the west is the more richly draped figure of the Persian Sibyl, straining forward to listen to the voices of winged genii above her, while her hand points outward into a perplexing future which her open scroll hardly helps her to realise. The delicate ornamentation of mother-of-pearl, the exquisite embroidery, and the other rich details call up a momentary feeling of regret that so much will be lost to sight, while they inspire a feeling of gratitude to the artist who has paid this homage to art, and especially in the House of God, that it should be executed not

merely to please the eye, but also to satisfy truth and beauty.

The next panel towards the west contains a vigorous picture of the young conqueror Alexander, who brought the Eastern and Western worlds together, and by the spread of the Greek language and culture indirectly prepared the way for Christ. The pose of the figure leaning on his sword is extremely fine; and there is an animated and highly decorated background representing the influx of the West of which Alexander was the great herald and exponent. On the other side of the window is Cyrus, gorgeous but designedly effeminate, he who was the shepherd of the Most High in bringing the Jews back to their own land. The background here is made up of a procession of the returning exiles, and other rich decorative work, the two panels together forming a magnificent piece of colour and design. The two next panels in the westernmost group on the north side of the choir show the more familiar examples of Abraham and Job; and both show groups rather than solitary figures. The moment chosen by the artist in the history of Abraham is the apparition of the three angelic beings to him as he sat in the door of his tent at Mamre, when the child of promise was announced and Sarah laughed as she heard; while Job is represented in his affliction, surrounded by his friends, suffering yet confident of the Redeemer of his life.

Returning to the south side of the choir beginning at the easternmost end we see a long line of temple-builders and decorators. David and Solomon occupy each a side of the window in the bay of the sanctuary: David, old and somewhat despondent, looking forward as it were from Pisgah to a temple which another must build; and Solomon, young and

gorgeously clad, conscious of his magnificence and glory, and confident of his ability to rear a shrine meet for the God of Israel. The next pair takes us back to earlier times, where Bezaleel and Aholiab are seen surrounded by the furniture of the tabernacle which they have been constructing; and in the last two we have a conception in the spirit of Michael Angelo, Moses in communion with the Majesty of God, and Jacob asleep at the foot of the ladder, realising in the vision of angels what was meant by Bethel the House of God. In these four panels of the westernmost bay there is, designedly or not, a point of contact with the flowing lines of the pictures in the dome, which will help to piece the new work on to the old.

Two points of the decoration have still been left unnoticed. The first of these is the windows. The problem of glazing in a church covered with mosaic must always be a difficult one; should there be coloured glass at all, and if so, of what character? The effect of ordinary stained glass on the walls at the side may be seen to advantage in the west window of the cathedral. These, on either side the surfaces of the panels, have become quite black and incapable of receiving decoration. Mr. Richmond therefore, while deciding to use coloured glass, devised a new plan, which, by a free use of leading and by employing a great deal of unloaded glass, admits light sufficiently broken to illuminate the surfaces of the wall without dazzling the eye. Nearly all the clerestory windows, while carried out with great success on this pattern, are different in tone and design from each other, and yet are wonderfully harmonious while admitting ample light. They will be regarded, we anticipate, not only as designs beautiful in themselves and subordinated

entirely to the mosaics, but as carrying out the true aim and object of windows. It would be futile, at the great height which they are from the eye, to describe the design, which, as in all Mr. Richmond's work, is of a very elaborate character.

The other portion of the decoration to be considered is the space behind the reredos, now called the Jesus Chapel. Only a part of this comes into Mr. Richmond's design, although of course the apse roof already described is immediately above the chapel altar. But at the entrances on either side, above Wren's beautiful iron gates, are two magnificent mosaics, containing some of Mr. Richmond's finest work. That on the north represents Melchizedec blessing Abraham, and that on the south the sacrifice of Noah. These subjects were chosen because from the plane of the sanctuary of the high altar both these subjects are seen, as it were, in connection with it. Here

will be noticed, in the splendid border of fruits which surround the pictures, how completely the artist has caught the spirit of Grinling Gibbons's work for which the cathedral is so famous. But although the other decoration of this chapel is not from the hands of Mr. Richmond, it is exceedingly beautiful; the marble of the small reredos, the exquisite recumbent statue of Dr. Liddon, and the splendid windows of Mr. Kempe being all worthy of careful inspection.

To have seen a work like this so successfully inaugurated is indeed a subject on which this generation may congratulate itself. And while we rejoice to see our great cathedral clothing herself with ornament, it is gratifying to be able to feel at the same time that a new field has been opened for the talents of English artists and English workmen, and that a great step has been taken towards forming an English school of mosaic founded on the best models of the past.

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NEWFOUNDLAND.¹

UPON the subject of Newfoundland it is to be feared that most of us are somewhat hazy. How far out into the Atlantic it thrusts its rugged headlands, so far, indeed, that a steamer can reach it in a trifle over three days from Queenstown, is not, we think, as a general rule quite realised. Its very position as our oldest colony has been obscured, and in many minds, no doubt, even usurped, by the aggressive personality of the Pilgrim Father and the Cavalier. Even for those of us who take an interest in colonial history it requires some mental effort to remember that four generations of Englishmen, to say nothing of other Europeans, had spent their summers on the Newfoundland coast before a white man had set foot in New England or Virginia. Before American history, as understood by most of us, had in fact dawned, the capes and bays of this wild island were better known by most English sailors than those of Clare or Kerry. Indeed, so ignorant, or forgetful, are we of the great part played by the Newfoundland fishery in history, that every chapter of the admirable book which Judge Prowse has written to remind us of our shortcomings seems suggestive of reproach. Nor does the author leave us entirely to deal with our own consciences in this respect; with the ardour of a true patriot he trounces us with justifiable severity for both our political and historical neglect of

his fog-enveloped fatherland. No more fitting name than that of Judge Prowse could well stand on the title-page of such a work, for in his own person he is a representative of one of the oldest Newfoundland families, and one, too, that hailed from Devonshire, the parent, it might almost be said, of the English fisheries in the North Atlantic. That the judge, moreover, has other qualifications than his mere patronymic for becoming the historian of his native colony will, we think, be readily conceded by any one who follows him through his eventful story.

The history of Newfoundland began in the year 1498, almost exactly four centuries ago. It divides itself into four distinct epochs, each one of which so nearly constitutes a century that for general purposes of memory and description they may fairly be so labelled. The sixteenth century, for instance, saw the fishermen of all nations resorting thither, and plying their trade upon nominally equal terms, though in actual fact under English rule. Throughout the seventeenth century the adventurers from Great Britain enjoyed a recognised supremacy, and administered rude justice through that unique functionary, the Fishing-Admiral. During the eighteenth century the colony was under naval governors sent from England; while for the last sixty years or so the inhabitants have enjoyed what are commonly called the blessings of constitutional government. This latter period is much the least pleasant reading of the whole story, and leaves one with something more than an impression that Newfoundland was both a healthier and more prosperous coun-

¹ A HISTORY OF NEWFOUNDLAND FROM THE ENGLISH, COLONIAL, AND FOREIGN RECORDS; by D. W. Prowse, Q.C., Judge of the Central District Court of Newfoundland. London, 1895.

try before the local politician came upon the scene.

But after all it would be misleading to regard Newfoundland, as one regards most other British colonies, from the standpoint of internal development. From first to last its territorial significance has been simply that of a vantage-ground for fishermen and fish-traders. As a field for the ordinary agricultural settler the ancient colony has never succeeded in obtaining the faintest outside recognition. There would be no material inaccuracy in saying that, away from its thinly-peopled sea-coast, to this very day Newfoundland is a howling and untrodden wilderness. It is probable that under compulsion, if such a thing were possible, the country might support quite a respectable farming community; while its mineral wealth, which is quite another matter, may yet some day be developed. But if agricultural emigrants avoided the rugged island when it was not only a much more notable place of resort, but possessed a real advantage in its relative propinquity to Great Britain, what hope could there be for it now when distance has no longer any significance, and the most fertile spots of the earth are as easy of access? Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, containing large tracts of well-settled agricultural country, can scarcely retain their rural population, while their virgin lands have long since ceased to be even considered, and for good reason, by European emigrants. What chance then can there be for poor Newfoundland to create a population large enough to make even a faint impression on its sombre and boundless solitudes? To the native of the island speculations on a task so formidable may be of some interest. He may repudiate with indignation the notion that wheat will not ripen and that fogs reign over land and sea for a third of the year, and may point

to potato-patches of prodigious yield and strips of oats that even the Manitoban could not despise. But all these things, and many more, unfortunately, can be grown in vast abundance over illimitable tracts and beneath kindlier skies, and even then under present conditions produce no great result to the grower. The settler's axe is almost silent in the still vast forests of older Canada. In New England farms that have been occupied and thriftily cultivated for generations are being abandoned wholesale. In the South Atlantic States entire counties are dropping out of cultivation. The future of Newfoundland in any such sense as this is not worth discussion. Nor indeed is it our business, which lies with its past; and the past of Newfoundland has not only a curious and interesting record in a domestic sense, but in its relations with the mother country and her own imperial history is one that should appeal strongly to English readers.

It has always been a common notion that for the first half of the sixteenth century the French, Spanish, and Portuguese had the Newfoundland fishery to themselves. Judge Prowse disposes summarily of this idea, and brings forward ample proof not only that the English fishing-fleet was there in great strength, but that for the whole century, and most certainly from the accession of Elizabeth, it ruled this heterogeneous floating colony in most masterful fashion. Spain was computed to have six thousand sailors on the Banks at this period; Portugal was not very far behind her, while France was probably more strongly represented than either. Though no question was made of the right of all these nations to an equal share in the trade, the supremacy of the British seamen, chiefly from Devonshire, half fishermen, half pirates, seems never to

have been disputed, or never, at any rate, successfully disputed. The soil of Newfoundland or Terra Nuova, it is true, was then of no moment. Its value was merely that of a refuge in stress of weather, and a place upon which to dry and pack the spoils of the deep. But upon this seemingly barren foothold the English adventurers, with that acquisitive instinct which foreign nations and ourselves are just now calling by such different names, kept from the first a firm and jealous grip; while in the floating, and upon the whole, peaceful republic which spent half of every year between the desert shores of Labrador and the grim headland of Cape Ray, our countrymen seem to have secured for themselves undisputed sway. The fisheries of Newfoundland are to-day, no doubt, an important item in the world's economy; but they are as nothing compared to the place they occupied in the days of the Tudors and the Stuarts. For a hundred years the foggy northern island was England's only colony, and its rugged indented coasts were almost as well known by the hardy seamen of Plymouth and Topsham, of Bideford and Dartmouth, as those of Britain. Newfoundland had not, it is true, been cleared and ploughed, reaped or sown; but when the Mayflower sailed to found the first colony in New England, five generations of Devon and Cornish men had been going backwards and forwards there with almost as little concern as they would have visited Ireland or the Scilly Isles.

We have heard much lately, and entirely to our advantage, of the great Elizabethan seamen, the privateers, that is to say, of the Spanish Main. But Judge Prowse most justly says that to claim for these alone the founding of our sea-power would be a monstrous oversight, though we fancy it is hardly an unnatural one.

The Newfoundland trade made the West Country a province of seamen and of people interested in maritime adventure, and the West Country gave to England her maritime ascendancy. By the end of the sixteenth century the Spanish navy had been so decimated that her seamen had almost disappeared from the Newfoundland coast, returning later on, however, in reduced numbers as whalers and sealers rather than fishermen. There were nevertheless even then some fifteen thousand of the latter, about a third, or possibly even more, of whom were British. Newfoundland as a matter of fact was looked upon by all the maritime nations as the training-ground of their seamen, as well as a great centre of trade. Breasting the fierce Atlantic gales of spring and autumn in their small ships of one or two hundred tons, weathering for months at a time the fogs and storms of those lonely far-off seas, it was here that English and French, and in a less degree Spaniards, Portuguese, and Dutch learned to be formidable to one another whenever the flag of battle should fly.

Nor was it only the amount of capital and the number of men employed in the trade that made it fill such a big space in English life at this period. Newfoundland became, in addition to its inexhaustible fisheries, an important centre of general traffic. The oils and wines and fruits of Southern Europe were carried there by the southern fishing-fleets, while in English bottoms went out cargoes of cordage, hosiery, cutlery, and other articles of British manufacture. Nor did Northern and Southern Europe only exchange their wares upon this remote and barren coast; when the peace of the world allowed it hundreds of English ships would beat homewards by the ports of Spain and Portugal, bartering their freights of

cod and herrings for the luxuries of the two Peninsula kingdoms. Nevertheless with all this coming and going, any regular settlement upon the soil of Newfoundland was as yet but trifling. Any movement in that direction was discountenanced by the English fishing interest, and when it took a serious form was strongly resented. With the exception of Saint John's, where a few merchants and traders from the earliest times took permanent root, the scattered settlements along the shore were in the sixteenth century mere clusters of shanties through which for the six winter months the bear and the wolf could roam undisturbed.

It was in 1623 that the first serious attempt was made to colonise Newfoundland; and as it was made by royal grantees who had no connection with the fishing interest, the traditional dislike of the latter to any permanent settlement was intensified into active hostility. These West Country vikings, by virtue of a century's occupation of Newfoundland seas and a century's overlordship of foreign fleets, could ill brook the intrusion of a set of landmen. And to make matters worse the latter came with charters that would make these ancient sons of the sea tributary to new men and new laws whenever they should set their foot on shore. But these land colonies pined and languished in the rude Newfoundland atmosphere. Sir William Vaughan of Carmarthenshire, with a company of Welshmen, tried his hand and failed; so did Falkland, so did Baltimore, the father of the celebrated founder of Maryland. But with their high-flown constitutions, fanciful organisations, and poor material they soon withered in the rugged Newfoundland soil and left scarcely any trace. The big stone house, indeed, in which Lord Baltimore and his family lived manfully for many years, was still

standing a century later, a solitary and pathetic relic of a noble though misdirected effort.

Most of that south-eastern peninsula of Avalon upon which Saint John's stands was included in the Baltimore grant, and £30,000, it is said, was expended on the property. But they all disappeared, these well-meaning, sanguine aristocrats with their motley following of lazy unpractical loons, and left Newfoundland, even more than other colonies, to be settled by those hardier spirits whom individual enterprise drew gradually to its shores. In the reign of Charles the First those terrible scourges of the ocean, the Sallee rovers or Moorish pirates, were gathering a rich harvest among the Newfoundland fleet. The town-records give us a glimpse of the Mayor of Weymouth, as representing the West Country interest, riding post-haste to the King at Woodstock to humbly pray that the royal fleet might hasten westwards to the rescue; for three hundred English ships, two hundred and fifty of which hailed from West Country ports with five thousand Devon and Cornish lads on board, to say nothing of the season's cargoes, were unprotected and in imminent danger of capture or destruction. Twenty-seven, it seems, had already been cut off and seized. Laud, says the Weymouth chronicle, struck his hand upon his breast, and promised that while he had life he would do his utmost in so consequential an affair, further declaring that in twelve months' time not a Turkish ship should be on the sea. Laud's name does not suggest itself to one as a terror to erratic corsairs, nor, it is needless perhaps to add, did it prove so. The almost insolent ignorance of colonial matters displayed by Charles the First and his son is in thorough harmony with the rest of their attitude as guardians of England's honour.

It was the second Charles who, towards the close of the century, when Eastern Virginia had become quite a populous country of freeholders, granted half of it with offensive frivolity to a couple of Court favourites. The storm raised was so great that the easy-going Sybarite, probably to his own surprise, found he had made a mistake, and was forced to throw his friends over, which he doubtless did with a light heart and a good grace. But the act sank deep into the minds of the Southern colonists, who had mainly stood by the Stuarts, and they never again put their trust in princes. In like fashion did Charles the First treat the Newfoundland colonists, who under the benevolent neutrality of his father had, as we have seen, occupied portions of the sea-coast. But this proceeding, we fear, was not mere frivolous stupidity, but strictly business of a dubious kind. The Devonshire faction, that is to say, the fishing interest, were always powerful at Court, and it appears that in this case they backed their petitions by those more substantial arguments which never came amiss to a Stuart king. In brief, this unblushing monarch granted the whole island of Newfoundland, regardless of his father's grantees and friends, to the Duke of Hamilton. This great personage represented the fishing as opposed to the colonial interest, and in his charter was inserted the artful clause that no settler was to be permitted to dwell within six miles of the shore. This was tantamount in Newfoundland to decreeing that the settlers of the preceding reign, planted at so much cost, were to be ruthlessly ejected. These monstrous regulations were only partially enforced, but they no doubt helped to dissipate the already feeble colonies of Baltimore, Vaughan, and their friends. This brings us back again to the further doings of Charles

the Second, and these as regards Newfoundland were very bad indeed, much worse than even his attempt to make the Virginia squires the slaves of a couple of dissolute and undeserving courtiers. For this light-hearted monarch had not been two years on the throne before he made a gratuitous present of nine-tenths of Newfoundland to the French. And one fine morning the English colonists, who by that time had become fairly numerous on the south-eastern coasts, beheld a French flotilla sail into Placentia Bay, and proceed forthwith to erect forts and dwelling-houses. This was the beginning of that French occupation which has ever since been so productive of friction between the nations, and of so little practical use to France. The permanent settlers at Placentia were few, but the place was unequalled in the island as a stronghold, and two hundred ships from Saint Malo, many of them, we are told, of four hundred tons burthen, made their headquarters here. Indeed at this time the sea-power of France as opposed to that of England was at its zenith, and the number of French fishermen sailing on these seas had risen to something like twenty thousand.

The Dutch too, in those days of Britain's degradation, did not confine their insults to the Channel and the Thames, but reached their long arms even to Saint John's, and made an attempt to capture the port. It was defended, and successfully defended, on this occasion by one Christopher Martin, who, people familiar with Torquay will be interested to know, hailed from the romantic hamlet of Cockington. This weather-beaten sailor has left an account of the engagement, and also his opinion of the general management of the island at this period. Though a West Countryman himself he was opposed to the

Devonshire attitude on the subject of colonisation, and argued vigorously against it. By this time the resident population of the Colony had grown considerably. Good houses and stores had arisen, well equipped with all appliances for the fish-trade, and a certain amount of land was cleared and in cultivation, while many of the merchants had become almost wealthy. But all this local development was regarded by the fishing-adventurers as inimical to their interests, and a final attempt to crush it was now made.

The plot was hatched and carried through by Sir Joshua Childs, a man of wealth and influence in England. Even Charles and his brother, the Duke of York, were somewhat staggered by the proposals to depopulate without compensation an English colony. Their easy consciences however were quieted in the usual financial fashion, and the iniquitous order for clearing the island of English settlers was acquiesced in by the same monarch who had introduced the French.

The removal of the French settlers from Arcadia, which Longfellow has so idealised in *EVANGELINE*, was an entirely justifiable proceeding compared to this extirpation of English settlers by Englishmen from motives of greed alone. It should be in fairness stated, however, that a considerable minority even in the Devonshire towns, which were the stronghold of the fishing interest, were opposed to a course so barbarous. We must at the same time try to realise, though the mental effort is considerable, that colonies in those days were not regarded by statesmen as wholly unmixed blessings. They were looked upon by many as dangerous rivals in trade, not as future customers. The New Englanders by this time had become immensely enterprising, not

to a very great extent as fishermen, but as traders they were to be met with on every sea, and that too in ships of their own building. It was not merely in every harbour of the North Atlantic that these Yankee craft became familiar objects, but laden with fish, and in utter contempt of the navigation laws, they sailed in and out of the Mediterranean ports or stole along the dark coasts of Africa in quest of negro slaves. The captains even sold their ships, it was said, in British harbours to the great alarm of the local craftsmen. It is perhaps no wonder that a generation which from commercial susceptibilities deliberately ruined the trade of Ireland, was not without petty fears and narrow jealousies of its colonial offspring. This last harrying of the Newfoundland colonists, though it was ruthlessly commenced, was too gross an outrage to continue. The naval officers upon the station effectively supported the outcry of a large minority both at home and in the fishing-fleet: the instruments of this official outrage, never perhaps very zealous, succumbed at last to the force of public opinion; and the land had peace.

All this time the Colony had been under the rule of that characteristic Newfoundland functionary the Fishing-Admiral. It had been the custom in earlier days for the first skipper who entered Saint John's Harbour in the spring to assume this office by tacit consent. As the duties, however, became more weighty and the remuneration, in the shape of bribes from litigants, more valuable, the old haphazard method gave way to one of selection, tempered, no doubt, by favouritism. These rude autocrats, who could scarcely sign their names, ruled both upon land and sea, and seem to have been ever ready to exchange their good offices for any sort

of commodity, from a basket of apples to a cargo of fish, according to the means of the litigant. The fishing population, however, seemed attached to the system, probably because it was a time-honoured one and an institution peculiarly their own. Nor indeed was it entirely abolished till the American war.

But at the close of the seventeenth century a worse enemy than the Devonshire fishermen was coming to Newfoundland. For with the advent of William the Third came the great struggle with France, and at the same time the redoubtable Frontenac, greatest of the many able Governors of Canada, took up his residence at Quebec. The New England colonies now found their prosperity checked and their very safety threatened. Frontenac was as able in diplomacy as in war. The Indian nations were brought into the field; French troops fell upon the English frontier with fire and sword; a fitting lieutenant was found by Frontenac in the Canadian D'Iberville, skilful alike by land or sea; and on Newfoundland fell the heavy hand of this resourceful warrior. British and French war-ships were in the North Atlantic flying at each other's throats, and making vain attempts at Placentia and Saint John's respectively. The French capital was the strongest place in the island by nature, while Saint John's was practically impregnable to the ships of that day, protected as it was by forts manned at this time by English sailors. But D'Iberville, born and reared amid Canadian forests, was not to be balked. Landing at Placentia he marched with Indian guides and four hundred men through the wilderness, and bursting suddenly upon the landward and unprotected side of Saint John's easily defeated the raw bands of astonished fishermen who had to meet his troops in the open. D'Iberville was supported by

several ships of war, and the town, with all the English settlements, now lay at his mercy. Nor was he merciful, for he treated Newfoundland as he had treated the New England frontier. Every fort and every house was razed to the ground; the coast-line became again a wilderness, and the damage was estimated at £200,000. In fact the Colony from now till the end of the war was a constant scene of combat between French and English, and the fishing-fleet sank from its average of three hundred ships to less than thirty. At the treaty of Utrecht England was weak as usual in her North Atlantic policy. She held these French possessions in the hollow of her hand; but she gave back the island of Cape Breton, and granted those concurrent fishing-rights to France which have been such a constant source of friction to this day. Judge Prowse declares that the insignificant fisheries of France, now only maintained in these waters by a system of bounties, cost the government no less than £50 a year per man, and are of practically no use as a naval training-ground. In these days, however, useless as the Newfoundland rights are to France, they have become a matter of national honour and sentiment; and this feeling among civilised nations not actually at war is regarded as legitimate even if inconvenient to others. But when England and France were fighting in deadly rivalry, as they did throughout the eighteenth century, such considerations would have been ridiculous. England was practically the sole enemy for which the navy of France existed; and it was chiefly in the interests of this navy that France struggled so hard to maintain a footing in Newfoundland. Yet at every treaty the diplomats, with what surely seems a fatuous short-sightedness, undid the work of

their victorious seamen, and gave back those rights to be for ever a thorn in the side of Great Britain.

At the Treaty of Utrecht the much-harried island settled down to the long period of peace and prosperity connected with Walpole's administration. The inhabitants had already rebuilt their towns, villages, and forts, but with increasing civilisation the anomaly of the Fishing-Admiral forced itself upon the islanders. It was felt that such a caricature of justice was no longer possible, and after much civic disturbance England at last sent out the first naval Governor, one Captain Osborn. The Crown, it must be said, had done this act of common sense upon its own responsibility without the formality of an Act of Parliament. So when the new Governor joined issue with the Fishing-Admirals who had received their original authority from Parliament, there was a great disturbance; and the worst of it was that the law was on the side of the Admirals. The irregularity was not set right by the home government for sixty years; and throughout the whole of that period the royal Governors with their jails, courthouses, magistrates, and police found themselves in constant conflict with the rough-tongued skipper who happened for that season to be the elected chief of the fishing-community.

Cape Breton had been ceded to the French, and thither went many of their countrymen from Newfoundland, clustering round the great fortress of Louisbourg which soon became the centre of the French power in these seas and the headquarters of their fisheries. In 1742 there was war again, and three years later an army of New England colonists aided by the Newfoundland fleet captured Louisbourg, the most brilliant achievement of colonial arms prior to the Revolution. How bitter was the

language throughout British America when it was restored, and what a famous siege was that in which it was retaken, are matters of some note in history.

Among the many distinguished Englishmen who were connected with Newfoundland during this century was Rodney, who was its Governor in 1749 and left behind him a great reputation for wisdom and justice. Mr. Hannay, in his life of the famous Admiral, gives the prescribed routine which was strictly followed by every naval governor of that time. In the spring it was his duty to leave the Downs with the men-of-war under his command, and dropping down the Channel call at Poole, Weymouth, Topsham, Dartmouth, Plymouth, and Falmouth. Having collected from these ports the entire Newfoundland fishing-fleet he carried them under his escort straight to Saint John's, where he took up his station for the summer, and at the same time the reins of the colonial government. His instructions were to keep his warships cruising throughout the open season on the look-out for pirates, smugglers, or other evildoers. It was a common grievance throughout all this period that English hands shipped for the season were carried off or enticed away by Yankee skippers, and as sea-going Englishmen were regarded by the naval authorities as precious and valuable material, every effort was made to stop the illicit traffic. When the month of October came round, His Excellency arranged with his deputy and officials on shore for the administration of the island during the coming winter; and then, gathering his fishing-fleet once more beneath his protecting wings, he sailed for Europe, though not direct to English shores. The consumption of dried fish must have dwindled enormously by this time in Protestant Britain, for the Admiral's standing-

orders were to convey the fleet straight to the Mediterranean, calling at Cadiz and Lisbon, thence to Barcelona, Majorca, Minorca, and Alicante, whence, disposing of their summer's spoils, they returned home laden with southern merchandise. The Admiral had then to report himself with his warships at Gravesend, which remained his station till the fishing-season came round again.

The Newfoundlanders of this century seem to have been noted as a rough and ready people given to deep curses and deep potations. They were not without church privileges; but to the New Englanders, whose church was the pivot of their existence, the boisterous islanders seemed an unregenerate race indeed, sheep wandering in the wilderness without deacons, ministers, or assemblies to guide their erring footsteps, or any censorious public opinion to regulate their way of life.

The men of Devon remained throughout all the eighteenth century the prevailing element in Newfoundland society. An old inn, still standing, at Newton Abbot seems to have been the chief of the many West Country trysting-places whence the great Newfoundland firms collected their hands. The period for the going and coming of these men was a red-letter day in the Devonian calendar. A common form of rustic calculation ran: "The parson's in Proverbs; the Newfanlan' men 'ull soon be coming home."

In 1762 Saint John's once more fell into French hands. Always neglectful of Newfoundland, important though it was to them, the English government had allowed the forts to decay and the garrisons to dwindle to a mere handful of fifty or sixty men. The French, sailing from Brest, eluded Hawke, and descending on the town with four ships and seven hun-

dred soldiers, occupied it without resistance, and set to work forthwith to fortify themselves. Colonel Amherst, brother of the famous general, was then at New York, and hearing of the disaster hastened with several ships and seven hundred men of the 60th, the Royal Scots, and Highlanders to the scene. There was a spirited and gallant fight, first at the landing-place, then on the hill-side; till at length the French were driven into their quarters and, their fleet deserting them, forced to surrender at discretion. Then came the Treaty of Paris, and the usual restoration to the vanquished French of their Newfoundland possessions, which had again of course fallen temporarily into the hands of the English. The islands of Saint Pierre and Miquelon were by this treaty permanently handed over to France, and remain in her possession to this day. There was great opposition at the time, intense beyond the Atlantic and almost equally so among the British merchants and sailors who recognised in Newfoundland the chief nursery of the French navy.

The period of the American war was a lively as well as a prosperous one for Newfoundland. Great efforts were made by the Americans to seduce the old colony from her allegiance; but though the commercial intercourse between the island and the main had become a very close one, the former showed no disposition whatever to break with the mother country. Indeed if there had been, the chances of success would have been but slight.

The Newfoundlanders profited immensely by the war. British ships, privateers, soldiers, and sailors were constantly at Saint John's. Much of the interrupted New England trade found its way there. Prize-money was spent freely, and the inhabitants

had no cause to repent their loyalty. The French islands were of course seized at once, and the inhabitants, to the number of some thirteen hundred, shipped off to France. Nor perhaps is it necessary to remark that at the peace they were given back again as usual. At the close of the war Newfoundland received a few, but very few, of those crowds of refugee loyalists from America who trooped into the Eastern provinces and gave a new life to Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, and founded Ontario. Things now upon the whole went well with her. In the war of 1812 she enjoyed another period of prosperous excitement; but, after all, the island remained really dependent on fishing and shipping interests. Farms were cleared around the sea-ports, but the people who cleared and worked them were there for other purposes. Such trifling development was merely incidental to the one absorbing interest of the Province. There has of a truth been plenty of incident in the last eighty years of Newfoundland's history, but space forbids us to do much more than refer our readers to the interesting and well-illustrated pages of the Judge himself. Fire and famine and financial distress have been lamentably frequent visitors throughout the whole of this century, and within the last half dozen years have twice brought the ancient Colony into most unfortunate prominence. Nor is there any question but that the Province has for this long time been living from hand to mouth, without anything to fall back upon in the hour of unforeseen calamity. Newfoundland might, no doubt, have failed equally as a Crown Colony, but its politicians have certainly brought it neither good fortune nor success. Home Rule was conceded in 1832; and the session of its first elected Parliament, the most diminutive perhaps ever yet

assembled, was taken ready advantage of by the London humorists. It was christened the Bow-wow Parliament, and is depicted in an admirable caricature of the time as a small group of Newfoundland dogs in session presided over by an astute-looking speaker of the same family in wig, spectacles, and bands. This functionary is represented as saying: "All those who are of this opinion will say *bow*; those of the contrary, *wow*."

But Newfoundland officialism has for all time had a very racy and humorous element about it, as might from its circumstances be expected. One of its earlier Chief Justices was a delightful person, almost worthy to have been a Fishing-Admiral in the seventeenth century. This gentleman, a substantial merchant by name Tremlett, and renowned for his rough unswerving honesty, was in 1802 made a subject of formal complaint to the Governor, Admiral Duckworth. The latter was well aware that it was the Chief Justice's aggressive honesty that was the trouble; nevertheless he had to bring the complaints officially to his notice. And this was the formal reply handed in to the Admiral: "To the first charge, Your Excellency, I answer that it is a lie. To the second charge I say that it is a d——d lie. And to the third I say that it is a d——d infernal lie. Your Excellency's obedient Servant, Thomas Tremlett." The humour of the incident is fully sustained in the reply of the complainants to this strenuous vindication, which was officially communicated to them by the Governor. They petitioned that there might be a public inquiry, "as they felt they were not equal to the Judge *on paper*." Such a paragon of judicial purity as the good Tremlett had proved could not of course be slighted, so the question was solved at the expense of Nova Scotia, whither

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he was removed at a higher salary,—while a person, as the Governor quaintly put it, “of more popular manners” was installed at Saint John’s.

It was in 1763, the year of the Treaty of Paris, that the first survey of the island was made, and made too by the famous Captain Cook. It must have been a formidable task, though perhaps not more so than it would be at the present day. For even yet, as we have said, with an area larger than England, it remains an almost wholly unredeemed wilderness. Even in its coast-line, as viewed from the ocean, there has always seemed to us something appallingly forbidding and desolate. The last time we saw it was from the deck of a trading-steamer, and for the whole of a gray December day its savage headlands and lonely bays followed one another in dreary and monotonous succession till they faded into the wintry night. There was no company on our ship, and the captain hugged the shore as close as he dared. We spent the day on deck with a pair of strong glasses that would have revealed any living object upon the melancholy russet hills, as yet untouched by snow, that swept inland from the cruel crags up which the white surf

was crawling. Here and there at long intervals was a tiny hamlet nestling in a cove, which only seemed to emphasise the desolation reigning over so vast an expanse of land and sea, for the latter was of course at this season of the year almost deserted. We had just left the bustling coast of New England; in a short time we should be amid the busy hum of the Mersey. It seemed to us, when in the presence of these barren solitudes, well nigh incredible that such things could be upon a highway thronged, as this has been for four hundred years, by those forces that above all others have tamed the waste places of the earth. There is, in truth, as this article has endeavoured to show, no mystery about the matter. But there is something curiously fascinating in a coast so long a familiar unit in the world’s history, and yet even now containing upon its face such scanty impress of human life and at its back none whatever. It is vastly different from the desolation of lands that lie outside the sphere of human interests; for there is a strange pathos here in a solitude almost as profound as that of Greenland, and yet in its very silence so eloquent of the famous names and stirring deeds of the past.

THE OLD PACKET-SERVICE.¹

"THE mail-steamer *Mercury* grounded on the *Lethe* shoal while entering the port of Guam and is reported a total wreck. Mails and passengers saved." Such is the type of a certain bald and prosaic statement which we frequently read without any particular emotion in the newspapers. We may chance to have a friend in *Lloyd's*, and if so we are for a moment anxious for his pocket; or we may have sailed with the self-same skipper in the lost vessel, in which case our comments will take the colour of our recollections of the voyage. But after all, mails and passengers are safe, and no great harm has therefore been done. New ships can be built and new cargoes manufactured; the *Lethe* shoal may be resurveyed if necessary, and the captain's certificate suspended if he deserves it; the Government of Guam may be subjected to diplomatic pressure on the dangerous state of its harbour, and so may good come out of evil; but we can turn with a good conscience from the shipping-news to the fashionable intelligence, for mails and passengers are saved. Mails and passengers, not passengers and mails; for letters come before lives, at any rate in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, and a single missing mail-bag causes more stir than three seamen washed overboard; while in the ordinary course of things, in the prosaic voyage from port to port, it is a matter of certainty that the mail shall enjoy the privilege of being the last aboard and the first ashore. The

divinity that hedges a king is a trifle to the sanctity that enwraps the mail.

It is not difficult to trace in a rude fashion the growth of this reverence for a packet of letters. In the first place the essence of a letter is that it shall be written, and the smallest written document is a very serious affair. The pith of the matter is that, humiliating though the confession may be, parchment, or even reasonably good paper and ink enjoy by nature a longer life than the human frame. Carlyle was eternally reviling sheepskin, but there is no getting over the fact that it is, in comparison with ourselves, immortal upon earth, and indeed the principal agent in conferring immortality upon men. Paper of course is less durable. We have heard an eminent publisher declare with a sigh that by the end of three hundred years every book that he had brought out would have crumbled into dust; but in truth for ninety-nine hundredths of them three centuries is an extravagant allowance of life. Milton surely understated his case when he said and maintained that it was almost as great a crime to kill a good book as a good man, for the best of men must die sooner or later, while through the merits of sheepskin and paper his books may live. The potential immortality of every written word invests it with a dignity that is forbidden to mere flesh and blood; it is no wonder that we bow down before it.

The signs of this peculiar veneration of documents are abundant enough in our actions of every day, but none perhaps is more striking than the name of the writing whereby a man

¹ A HISTORY OF THE POST OFFICE PACKET-SERVICE, between the years 1793 and 1815, compiled from Records chiefly official; by Arthur H. Norway. London, 1895.

seeks to extend his influence beyond the term of his own life. A sovereign alone ventures to speak of his will and pleasure during his lifetime; but every man from the day of his death assumes sovereign rights and talks of his will, which he carefully calls his last will; for no one knows, and this is one of the most interesting features in letters, what written document may be actually his last. Hence there grows up a peculiar responsibility about the custody of written words, no doubt easily explicable in the days when men did not commit trivialities to writing, but still having its root in a kind of superstition. The destruction of a will, to take the strongest case, is looked upon not only as a crime against the living, but virtually as an act of sacrilege. Again, men who will remorselessly pull down old houses, and under the guise of restoration mutilate old churches, hesitate before they destroy old papers; they will store them away in garrets and cellars for a prey to rats and mould, but they rarely have the courage deliberately to make away with them. Women are well known to be the most inveterate preservers of letters; they have so little faith in abstract immortality, whatever their professions, that they cherish the poor bundles of rags as tenderly as though they were living creatures.

Out of these two primary sentiments, reverence for a written word and high sense of the duty of preserving the same, has ultimately grown the sanctity of Her Majesty's mail. The historian of the Post Office has furnished us with many instances of a devotion to duty on the part of its officials which are unsurpassed in the annals of any service, civil, religious, or military; and Mr. Arthur Norway has now supplemented these by a volume, which is interesting not only as a contribution to the literature of

the department, but as a chapter of naval and military history which has remained too long unwritten. The material for such work is not to be found without long and painful groping among musty and forgotten manuscripts; but Mr. Norway, avoiding the example too often set in more pretentious histories, has suppressed all parade of research, brushed away all dust and cobwebs, and woven the dry official records into a plain, straightforward narrative, as stirring as any fictitious tale of adventure and much better written than most.

The first institution of Packet-Services across the two Channels and the North Sea probably dates back to very ancient times. In the days when England was a province of France, and during the later period when France was a province of England, the need of a channel for regular correspondence must have made itself irresistibly felt; and even after the loss of Calais the long presence of English troops and English agents in the Low Countries called for almost as constant means of communication with Holland. The service probably made a great stride in the days of the Protectorate; for Secretary Thurloe, who hung the secrets of all Europe at the Protector's girdle, could do so only by means of uninterrupted correspondence with his agents abroad, and being Postmaster himself could regulate the packets to suit his wishes. Still the system was not extended outside the narrow seas either during Cromwell's reign, or that of his successor. The need for such extension became pressing only through the growth of our colonial possessions.

We are accustomed to look upon colonial expansion as a movement of comparatively modern date, and to ignore the share of attention that was claimed even two centuries ago by our kin beyond sea, and the labour that

their affairs entailed on the Board of Trade and Plantations. It is true that our colonies had been so established as apparently to call for little administrative interference from English officials. Between Lords Proprietors and Chartered Companies the Government appeared to be seated almost exclusively in private hands. Moreover it was a fixed principle of colonial policy that every new settlement should forthwith be endowed with a constitution on the English model, and allowed for the most part to manage its own affairs. None the less, however, the authority of the Crown was constantly invoked. There were disputes, particularly about boundaries, to be settled, sovereign rights to be upheld, and occasionally rebellions to be suppressed. Massachusetts, as may be believed of the leader of the rebellion of 1775, was a most troublesome possession; Rhode Island, Connecticut, and New Plymouth never ceased quarrelling about territorial limits; Virginia was much disquieted by a rebellion; and Carolina, though judiciously administered by the Lords Proprietors, had not been exempt from the same disorder; Maine was eternally wailing against the misdeeds of Massachusetts, and Maryland alone enjoyed a more or less peaceful existence under Lord Baltimore. Further north there was Newfoundland, always a most distressful country, writhing under the yoke of the West Country adventurers in whose power it lay, and incessantly shrieking to the Crown for help. To the south-east there was Bermuda, also a hot-bed of grievances owing to the high-handed government of the Somers Islands Company. Still further to the south, Nevis, Montserrat, Antigua, part of Saint Kitts, Barbados, and Jamaica, each with its own little houses of Lords and Commons, lay quaking in their shoes before the naval power of France, and half tor-

mented, half comforted by the presence of swarms of privateers.

With all these settlements there passed a flood of correspondence to and from the Board of Trade and Plantations, and more particularly with the West Indian islands which were shielded by no interposition of Proprietors or Chartered Companies. The enforcement of the Navigation Acts was one principal subject of discussion; unending wrangles between the islands and the Royal African Company, which possessed the monopoly of the trade in live negroes, made another; the menaces of the French squadron constituted a third. All were important questions alike to mother country and colonies, but the difficulty in adjusting them was increased tenfold by the absence of any regular means of communication. Merchant vessels were, with the occasional exception of a man-of-war, the only ships that passed between England and the islands, and they of course would not sail without cargo. Once, when the whole year's produce of an island was destroyed by a hurricane, communication with England ceased for two and twenty solid months; the merchant vessels on the spot waited for the next year's crop before they sailed home, and of course no more ships came out from England meanwhile. Moreover any unarmed vessel ran great risk of capture by the Algerine pirates that swarmed in the Channel. Colonial governors on their way to their posts, and colonial agents bound homeward with an armful of grievances, were impartially captured and carried off. The Newfoundland fishing-fleet sailed under convoy of a King's ship, and governors nominated by the King always crossed the Atlantic in a frigate.

The difficulties both of trade and administration in such conditions may easily be conceived. The Board of

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Plantations was longing to exert more immediate control over the West Indian islands and reduce them more nearly to their present position of Crown Colonies, but they were met always by the insuperable objections of irregular communication. The local legislatures were tenacious of their privileges, and actually maintained them, in spite of a thousand absurdities, unaltered until our own time. The first attempt to subject them more directly to the Board of Trade had not been abandoned ten years when the Post Office instituted the one thing needful to have made it feasible. In 1688 a Packet-Service was established for regular communication to Corunna, or, as it was called, the Groyne,¹ from the port of Falmouth, and four years later additional packets were added to ply to the West Indies and the Southern States of America from the same station.

Falmouth consequently during the following century grew to a wealth and importance which, though still recollected by a few living men, is in these days hardly credible. It is only within the last two generations, it must be remembered, that there has departed from the West Indies the glory which, while it lasted, was enough of itself to raise their post-towns in England to dignity. But apart from this, during the eighteenth and the earlier years of the present century most of the great news came from the west, and Falmouth through its communication with Spain embraced the field of the Mediterranean also. The intelligence for which the whole country was waiting, whether of Byng at Sicily or Pococke at Havana, of Cornwallis at Yorktown or Rodney at Saint Lucia, of Jervis at

Saint Vincent or Nelson at Trafalgar, of Moore at Corunna or Wellington at Vittoria, all reached Falmouth first; and, as Mr. Norway tells us, it was ventilated and discussed in every tavern in the town a full day before it reached the hands even of Ministers in London.

A besetting sin of the packets from the earliest times was the practice of carrying goods for purposes of trade, which made the service extremely profitable to officers and men, but led to overloading the vessels and consequently to slow passages. It had been strictly forbidden by Charles the Second as far back as 1660, but, as will presently be seen, without any great effect. A second failing, which was perhaps almost inevitable in early days when a vessel went armed to sea, was the partiality for a little quiet piracy. The temptation was doubtless great. England and Spain were constantly at war during the eighteenth century, and Spanish prizes were always reputed to be rich. The Admiralty Courts could always be bribed to condemn the prize, the Post Office looked the other way, the crews made their prize-money; and thus every one, except of course the Spaniards, was satisfied. It is true that the packets fought more than one gallant action in their early days in honest defence of their ships and of their mail; but there were far too many engagements of a different kind which led to the abuse of putting the capture of prizes first and the safety of the mail second. In fact the time came when the Packet-Service required to be overhauled with a strong hand, and the moment chosen was, curiously enough, the outbreak of the great war of 1793. The authorities then decided that, in spite of the risk of French privateers, the armament of the packets should be reduced, and their commanders instructed to run away from any armed vessel, or

¹ Corrupted, of course, from the French *Corogne*. Leghorn is one of the few survivals of the barbarous lingo of the old merchant-shippers.

to fight her only when it was impossible to run, and, if resistance were impossible, to sink the mails and surrender. To make obedience to these orders the surer a special type of vessel was selected of about one hundred and eighty tons burden, with a crew of twenty-eight men and an armament of six guns, four four-pounders and two six-pounders only.

It was a daring experiment, for it placed the packets at the mercy of the majority of the French privateers, if the complement of men and the weight of metal were made the standard of comparison; and it remained to be seen whether the sanctity of the mail would inspire its custodians to extraordinary exertions in its defence. The result at first was not discouraging. In December, 1793, the Antelope packet fought a desperate action off the coast of Jamaica against the privateer *Atalanta*. Fever was at work among the crew of the Antelope, and she had but two-and-twenty men fit for duty against sixty-five in the privateer. The *Atalanta*, knowing where her own superiority lay, bore down upon the packet, threw out grappling-irons and tried to carry her by boarding. By the ready ability of the packet's commander, Curtis, the first attack was defeated with loss; but he was presently shot dead, and the command passed to the boatswain, a man named Pasco. He was so illiterate that he could not write his name; but he quite understood how to command a ship in action, and he continued the defence with such vigour that the privateersmen cast loose the grapples and prepared to sheer off. They were not, however, to escape so easily. Before the two vessels could separate Pasco ran aloft, and lashing the *Atalanta's* square-sail-yard to the Antelope's fore-shrouds, hammered away till the enemy, for all the bloody flag of *no quarter* which was nailed to

their masthead, cried out for mercy. On taking possession of his prize Pasco found thirty-two of his opponents dead on the deck, and but sixteen of the whole sixty-five still unhurt. The Antelope's loss was three killed and four wounded. It is satisfactory to be able to add that Pasco did not want for praise and reward on his return home after this gallant action.

This brilliant beginning, however, was not well followed up. In the next seven or eight years packet after packet was captured with doleful regularity, and the West India merchants were loud in their complaints. It soon became apparent that the packets, though nominally built for speed, were for some reason overtaken with surprising ease; and there grew up unpleasant suspicions that they were over ready to surrender to vessels which they might have beaten off. The curious coincidence that nearly all packets were captured on the homeward voyage led to careful investigation, and thus it came out that the old abuse of carrying goods for trade was at the bottom of the mystery. The cargo received on board at Falmouth was insured for the double voyage out and home; the men sold it in the West Indies and remitted their proceeds homeward; and finally the ship was surrendered to the first enemy with a readiness that encouraged the capturing vessel to put all hands ashore in their own boat. The crew then claimed their insurance-money, which was thus added to their profits out of the voyage. It was a sad discovery, which lamentably tarnished the fair fame of the Packet-Service. Once again a strong hand was necessary to restore efficiency; the abuses were put down in spite of much grumbling, and when the short breathing-space given by the Peace of Amiens was past, the packets had a

chance of regaining their good character.

To do them justice they made worthy use of their opportunity. It is difficult out of the number of brilliant actions chronicled by Mr. Norway to select one out of half a dozen of equal gallantry for special mention. The scene until 1812 was generally the lovely waters of the Caribbean Archipelago, at that time swarming with privateers which stole out from Guadeloupe to make havoc of the English trade. How busy they kept the English cruisers, and how formidable they might be as opponents, manned as they were by the desperadoes of all nations, we may read for ourselves in the pages of PETER SIMPLE and TOM CRINGLE'S LOG. Marryat is not ashamed to tell of the occasional failures even of a man-of-war's crew to capture these vessels, so that it may be imagined that they were no playthings to the poor little packets. Yet the packets faced them always with extraordinary gallantry, though they were sometimes forced after a desperate fight to sink the mail and haul down the colours. On one memorable occasion a single packet actually stepped in to save an English island.

That island was Dominica, the loveliest, as some maintain, of all the Antilles, the most southerly of the Leeward Islands, and unhappily situated within dangerous proximity to the French island of Guadeloupe. The garrison that held it was small; men died so fast in the West Indies in those days that it could hardly be otherwise; and lying as it does within sight of French troops the island was a standing temptation to French enterprise. It so happened that the crew of the only man-of-war then cruising off the island, H.M.S. Dominica, mutinied and carried the ship to the enemy at Guadeloupe. It is melan-

choly to have to record so ugly a story, but as the tale of the *Hermione* also shows, the troubles that are remembered by the name of the *Nore* were at work in every British naval station. The French at once replaced the mutineers with men of their own nation, packed her with troops, added a sloop, a schooner, and two galleys as consorts, and sent the whole flotilla away to capture the Dominican capital, Roseau. The armament appeared off the entrance to the port on May 24th, 1806.

The planters of Dominica were at their wits' end. Even if they could defeat an attempt at a landing, they could hardly hope to save the sugar-ships in the harbour, the capture of which would spell ruin to many of them. While still debating they saw two more vessels enter the bay, the packet *Duke of Montrose*, Captain Dynely, under the convoy of H.M.S. *Attentive*. The Governor of the island ordered the *Attentive* to stand off and intercept the French flotilla, but being a miserable sailer she was easily left behind; and it was plain that, unless the packet took up the quarrel, the mischief would be done before the *Attentive* could get into action. The Governor therefore appealed to Dynely to take a detachment of troops on board and fight in defence of the island. Dynely hesitated; his vessel was not national property, and his instructions covered no such contingency as this. He asked first that the merchants would guarantee the value of his vessel in case she were lost. They refused. He then offered to take upon himself the value of masts, yards, and rigging, if they would do the like for the hull. Again they refused; the West Indian planter is the most hospitable of men, but he loses spirit under a tropical sun. Dynely therefore accepted the whole responsibility, sent his mails ashore,

and bade any man that had no mind to follow him in an action which was no part of his business, to go ashore with them if he would. The Falmouth crew of course stood by him to a man; so forty men of the Forty-sixth and Third West India Regiments were taken on board as a reinforcement: it was likely enough that they were no new hands at the work, for in those haphazard days even Light Dragoons occasionally did duty as Marines; and the Duke of Montrose stood out of the bay to meet three vessels, the smallest of which was as powerful as herself.

The wind was very light, but the packet, a fine sailer and skilfully handled, could outmanœuvre her adversaries; and Dynely, noticing that the French were separated, seized the opportunity to bear down upon the largest of them alone. Presently the wind dropped altogether; Dynely got out his boats, towed his ship within pistol-shot, and opened fire. For three-quarters of an hour he hammered at her, no one of the French consorts daring apparently to interfere, and at last forced her to strike. Losing no time he turned next to the former King's ship *Dominica*, which turned and fled, as it happened, straight into the jaws of another English cruiser, the *Wasp*, which had been attracted by the firing. Returning from the chase Dynely found the rest of the work done. The *Attentive* had captured both the galleys: a party of the Forty-Eighth Regiment had rowed off from shore and captured the remaining ship by boarding; and the whole affair was over. *Dominica* had been saved by the packet and by nothing else; and Dynely, on arriving home, received a special reward and commendation from the Admiralty. He did not live long to enjoy his honours. In December of the same year he was attacked close to Barbados by a

powerful French privateer which carried eighty-five men against his eight and twenty. For three hours he fought her desperately, till he was shot dead, when the crew, disheartened by the loss of both their commander and mate, who was already fallen, hauled down their colours.

More brilliant even than this was an action fought by the *Windsor Castle* under her master William Rogers, in 1807. Here again, the assailing privateer, more powerful in armament and still more powerful in men than her intended victim, ran alongside the packet and strove to carry her by boarding. In the middle of the action the wind died away and the two vessels lay locked together for more than two hours, unable to part, and cannonading each other furiously. Of the twenty-eight English three were killed and ten wounded; but the survivors stuck to their guns indomitably, until at last the French fire slackened, and at every discharge of their own they heard the enemy scream, a ghastly womanish sound to be heard among men. Finally the packet's men, having repelled the French attack, took the offensive in their turn and after a sharp struggle captured the privateer. It was a victory of sheer pluck and skill, won by a slaughter which, considering the small numbers engaged, is not easily matched even in the history of the Royal Navy.

But a far more terrible trial came for the packets on the outbreak of the American war in 1812. The French privateers, well-found though they were and manned with desperate men, were child's play to the American, which were twice as powerful and manned by English deserters. Where English frigates were overmatched, it is hardly surprising that the little packets should have gone to the wall. And yet they fought even against

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overwhelming odds with a desperate courage and an obstinacy remarkable even among British seamen. Captain Cock in the Townsend, with a crew of thirty-two men and four passengers, fought against two American privateers simultaneously for more than three hours before he would consent to surrender. Each of his assailants was superior to him singly in strength, and the two carried together nearly five times his weight of metal and seven times his strength of men. Yet even when they had battered the packet into a wreck, when half its crew was in the surgeon's hands, and when she was actually in a sinking state, Cock only with great reluctance hauled down his colours. He had repelled countless attempts to board, and it was hard to have to yield to sheer weight of metal. The Townsend was so heavily shattered that the Americans, finding her not worth keeping, restored her for a small sum to her captain, who duly brought her into her destination, though without the mail for which he had struggled so gallantly. Cock lived to fight two or three more actions before he died, worn out with wounds and hard work. His name should be remembered at the Post Office, for no man ever made a nobler fight for his mail.

With such contests the Packet-Service was occupied during the three years from 1812 to 1815. A few years later the old arrangements were altered, and Falmouth knew the Service no more. In spite of occasional lapses from the path of rectitude the Cornishmen had played their part bravely for more than a century; and it is interesting to know that the old spirit which made the West Country the centre of adventure in Elizabeth's day

still lasted to the close of the great French War, and still responded to the old cry of Westward Ho! It may be that their time will come again, for the Cornish fishermen with their handsome half-Jewish type of face, great frames, and incomparable natural dignity, impress one always as a folk that when in earnest can do great things. There is not a great deal to choose, though there is a good deal to contrast, between them and their fair-haired, blue-eyed brethren of Devon; and the Devon men have proved well enough what they can do.

Meanwhile, as we said at the beginning, the result of these stubborn packet-fights has been to enhance the sanctity of the mail, and give our modern steamers a standard by which to rate the importance of their trust. Though submarine cables spread wide, and the repairing steamers of the world rest in English hands, there is still a chance that the ordeal so bravely passed by the Falmouth packets in the great war may some day have again to be faced. Such mails as are carried in these days can hardly be sunk at short notice, and the steamers, unless they have the advantage in speed, must needs fight to preserve them. It is a curious question, possibly hardly thought out yet even by experts, what may be the fate of the mails in the next great war, and it may be that one day Mr. Norway's book may be consulted for precedents. Meanwhile for our own part we are content to read it for a vivid study of English devotion and English heroism, which does honour alike to the English merchant service, and to a great though much abused public department.

MARY STUART AT SAINT GERMAINS.

HENRY THE SECOND of France often declared that his son Charlot, afterwards Charles the Ninth, and Mary Stuart, received their nurture from Ronsard. Nor is it difficult to trace this gentle master's influence in the poetic essays of the gifted pair, though little enough of it, unfortunately, in their conduct of life.

At Saint Germain's the young queen, Catherine of Medicis, had gathered about her a pretty child's court where rhyming and romance were the order of the day. Little Madam Mary Stuart held the sceptre of love and beauty in this sylvan world, and Ronsard, Prince of Poets, was its laureate. The post could have been no sinecure, we imagine, which exacted not only a *Franciade*, and courtly eulogies and epithalamiums interminable (wearisome writing to judge by the reading), but the supervision as well of court pageantries, and the composition of numerous couplets, cartels, and such like conceits, for the players to mouth at masks and mummeries. He was called upon, no doubt, to help to set afoot those joyous games of chivalry which the royal nurslings played while summer lasted under the greenwood tree. Valorous Don Quixote had not yet sallied forth, albeit busy just then furbishing up his grandsire's rusty armour; and the legendary period, dear to childhood's heart, of giants, fire-breathing dragons, infidels, enchanted princesses with their attendant knights-errant, was still, comparatively speaking, within hailing distance. We catch a pleasant glimpse of the eager, blue-eyed poet, his lute under his arm, his mantle awry, as he leads afield his merry band of rosy-cheeked lads

and dainty lasses. Up hill and down dale they race; through thickets where many a silken shred pays toll for the benefit of thrifty nest-builders, by mossy banks, by ferny dingles, and brown dimpling brooks that make sweet laughter in many a silent place. Echo tracks their flight down the dim aisles of that mysterious shadow-world whose secret ways the master alone knows. "I was not yet twelve years old," he writes, condescending to the beautiful old lyrical tongue of France which no one could use to better purpose when it suited him; "I was barely out of childhood, when, far removed from the noise of streets, in deep-wooded valleys under the hanging trees, in grottoes, leafy, hidden, safe from rash intrusion, I gave myself up without a care to the delights of song-making. Echo answered me, and the rustic deities peeped in upon me; dryads, fauns, satyrs, the nymphs of woods and meadows; wild creatures with horns in the middle of the forehead, balancing themselves like goats and leaping from rock to rock; and the fantastic troop of fairies who dance in ring, their kirtles ungirdled and flung to the wind."

As one reads, the centuries roll back, and the world grows young again. Paris, like fair Rosamund of the legend, lies hidden away in a green forest labyrinth; no sky-raking tower is there to advertise the last wonder of creation; no clamorous iron rails; no highways broad and straight and dusty stretching away to the city gates. Even the silver winding old Seine seems loath to find the road thither, so pleasant is this dally-

ing among green osier isles and banks of flowering iris, so cool the shadows under her hanging woods.

"After the death of our late Lord King of glorious memory," writes a local chronicler, one Bonhomme André du Chêne, "his son, great Henry, second of his name, came to the throne; who likewise honoured his Saint Germain's above all other royal residences; esteeming it the most rare in beauty, the most gracious in sojourn, the most abundant in all sorts of delights. To come to it from Paris it is necessary to cross three or four fords, unless, indeed, one makes a wide *détour*, or takes barge and arrives by water. I cannot stop here to describe the galleries, the chambers, ante-chambers, offices, the chapel (constructed, one tells us, in the days of Queen Blanche), the terraces, courts, the places for tennis and pall-mall, flower gardens, willow walks, vineyards, mountains, and valleys, the village of Pecq, which lies at the foot of the hill beside the river Seine. Nor can I more than mention that famous forest under the walls of the said noble castle, full of fine game, and such lofty trees covered with a leafage so umbrageous, that the sun in its most ardent heats can never penetrate; a forest, we are told, where in times past the rustic deities were wont to make their retreat, as to-day, during the honourable repose of peace, it is the resort of our King and Princes. For of a verity, if ever the Majesty of the Lilies hath especially honoured and cherished one spot in our France, it is, methinks, beyond dispute, the same Château-en-Laye, after that of Fontaine-belle-eau."

Legendary Brocéliande could not have lent a more appropriate scene, and with a poet for prompter the promising young players of Catherine's company were well equipped. Handsome Henry of Anjou played

the part of Amadis of Gaul; others figured in the parts of Giron le Courtois, Roland of France, and such like paladins of romance. More difficult, perhaps, through very embarrassment of riches, was the choice of Queen of Love and Beauty. "I do declare," cries an enthusiastic courtier, "that April in its most perfect spring-time hath not so many beautiful flowers, nor bears such fragrant verdure." Behold them where they troop in dazzling array, marshalled by the courtly Brantôme in his PRINCESSES OF FRANCE. First of the pretty flock steps forth Madam Elizabeth, eldest daughter of the Lilies, or rather, for her rare grace and beauty, Elizabeth Queen of the World. So highly, we are informed, were her excellences appreciated by her royal father, that sooner than throw her away in an unequal match he permitted her younger sister to take precedence in marriage; and thus was enabled, after Mary of England's death, to secure an alliance with the Roy Hespagnol, black Philip of Spain, a consummation devoutly to be wished. But Heaven has special compassion for daughters of the Fleur-de-Lis, so the old poets declare, and soon released this gentle princess from her vows. She drooped and died young, hastened, as was bruited in France, by poison.

After Madam Elizabeth trips the younger sister who married into Lorraine, a kind and gentle princess, we are assured, with that open and sunny cast of countenance which gives pleasure to all beholders. And after Claude the mysterious Diana, legitimised daughter of France; Diana of the silver bow, lover of arms, horses, and the chase. Later on, in the tragic pages of history, we catch another glimpse of poor blithe Claude where she lies huddled at the foot of Catherine's bed, weeping bitterly on

the eve of Saint Bartholomew; and more than once again she steps upon the scene, a majestic figure, "true Valois and true Frenchwoman," bewailing the trampled lilies of her house. But no premonition of such dark days now casts its shadow before; and by the bosky ways of Saint Germain rides young Diana, prime favourite with her royal father, as with every intrepid horseman that pricks in his train. Mark her rich habit of green and silver, and the plumed hat she wears, cocked bravely to one side *à la Guelf*. Surely no costume could be braver, nor any lady in the land sit her horse with a better grace, or guide with firmer hand that fiery little barb, *Le Dottol*, which King Henry himself, the more to do her honour, has broken for her use.

Pass on, bright Diana! Another follows more dazzling still. No mortal, surely, no queen or empress of mere earthly mould the one who now approaches, trailing her gold incrustated robe and veil of shining tissue. More like the very goddess Aurora in person, who, strolling heedlessly upon the confines of Heaven, hath gone astray in our terrestrial sphere. The *Sieur de Brantôme* is fain to admit that once launched on the subject of Madam Margaret's surpassing charms, he shall, perchance, lay himself open to the accusation of prolixity: "But cry your mercy, ladies, whose the fault, indeed, since there is not, was not, and never can be any limit to the list of her most rare perfections?" Suffice it for us, however, to repeat in bald language, ignorant of the elegances of courts, that this youngest and fairest of Catherine's daughters was not one of your *nabottes*, or elbow-high dames, who appear quite crushed beneath the weight of their own jewels and gowns. On the contrary she could

carry with ease, and for hours together if need be, the most magnificent state robes, even when fashioned out of that fabulous web of molten gold which came from the Grand Sultan's looms. Neither was she, like some beauties of our acquaintance, constrained to dissemble her charms behind a veil, or mask, or such-like subterfuge, when facing the searching light of day. "And I declare to you that the privilege of church-going was not neglected on such high festivals as Palm Sunday, or Candlemas, when it was known that this princess would walk in the procession, carrying her branch (as it were the palm of beauty) and her rich *parure*, with that inimitable air, half haughty, half tender. If peradventure we courtiers lost something of our devotions, truly it was not altogether without compensation, seeing that the greatest miscreant among us, gazing on such divine beauty, could no longer deny the power of miracles."

Farther than this, it must be acknowledged, the high-swelling compliment, even of those days, could hardly be carried. In fact, we are half persuaded that the bestowing of the golden apple in Catherine's court of Love and Beauty might have proved a still more embarrassing affair had Madam Margaret,—beautiful, scandalous, all-conquering Queen Margot—chanced to come into the world a few years earlier. As it was she was not yet born when the six years' old Queen of Scots landed in France. Touching this event a letter addressed by Henry the Second to the Duke of Aumale comes opportunely to hand. "I must inform you, my cousin," writes the King, all politic suavity, "that my daughter, the Queen of Scotland, arrived Sunday at Carrières [Saint Germain-en-Laye] where are my children. And from what I learn, not only by letter from my cousin,

your mother, but also from the Sieur de Humières, it is apparent that at first meeting my son and she struck up a mighty friendship, and are as familiar together as if they had been acquainted all their lives. And no one comes from before her who is not full of admiration as of something marvellous; which redoubles in me the desire I have to see her; as I hope soon to do, by Heaven's grace: praying the same, my cousin, to keep you in all good health and safety. Written at Moulins, the 18th of October, 1548."

Great Henry, as he was called in his lifetime, has not many apologists, but to his credit it must be said that he was fond of children, and partial to their society. "My father took me upon his knee to hear my childish prattle," Margaret of Valois writes pleasantly in one place; while another chronicles how the Dauphin, the sickly eldest born, will accept from no hand save his father's the obnoxious black draught. As for little Madame Marie Destrauard (contemporary orthography plays queer havoc with Mary's name), that pretty fairy had, as usual, but to see to vanquish. We are told how at their first interview King Henry enthroned the child on his knee, passed his great hand, callous from much friction of lance, racket, and bridle-rein, over her soft curls, pinched her peach-blossom cheeks, nipped at her dainty fingers,—caressing those budding charms which even in infancy cast a spell like witchcraft, and later on, at the tragic culmination of her career, lent a martyr's halo to the pale severed head. If the King's Majesty fell straightway under her fascination, how much more so his faithful courtiers! Not a voice but was ready to cry miracle when this little queen, a very sprite of beauty, tripped it in one of her wild native dances, decked out after the barbarous

fashion of her country; or when, at the King's instigation, she sang and chattered in that strange tongue, "the which, uncouth, horrid, and most rustical as it sounded in any other mouth, when spoken by this princess became melodious sweet as ever I heard."

More than one sharp-pointed pen, meanwhile, was taking notes for our benefit of those upstart Lorrainers (in Huguenot nomenclature, *les larrons*, thieves), who stood by, spectators of their young kinswoman's success. Six brothers in all, sons of the canny old Duke Claude and his high and virtuous spouse Dame Antoinette de Bourbon, frequented the court at this time, as who should best set the fashions in the cut of a velvet cloak or the lilt of a rakish blade. Every one his turn, was their audacious motto. Bright and early of a morning the younger members were astir, hastening to wait upon the *levée* of their eldest, Monseigneur Duc d'Aumale, afterwards known as Monsieur de Guise-le-Grand. Reinforced by his presence, and each one his part well rehearsed, they then proceeded to show themselves at the King's solemn toilette, where they took their turns with other proud vassals of France at handing the royal shirt, the ewer, the morning draught, and so forth.

Not to this day is it given for all who run to read under great Duke Francis's haughty brows, or to probe the mellifluous urbanity of his illustrious and most reverend brother, the Cardinal. Yet what busybody among us can refrain from prying and pondering? Mark the game spread out before them: the next move theirs,—England checkmated (he laughs best who laughs last),—the baby queen between their very fingers, to turn, to twist, to face about like any bit of sculptured ivory on checkered board. The whole court is loud in

admiration. Great Henry himself allows a smile to relax his lantern jaws, the while he calls again for that pleasant history of Mary, Queen-Regent of Scotland (true Lorraine of the race), and of how she outwitted every mother's son of them, perfidious English and scurvy Scots alike.

So the story is repeated, with Homeric longevity, to judge by the accounts handed down. It is told how this princess, hard pressed by the English, who demanded her daughter in marriage at the sword's point, took ship under command of Nicolas Durand de Villegagnon, and with him sped out of Leith harbour in plain sight of all, as if to make the straight route for France; but presently, turning secretly about, stole along the north coast of Scotland by a passage hitherto deemed impracticable; and thus arrived unexpectedly at Dunbritton, where was waiting the Sieur Philippe Maillé de Brezé with his vessel, to whom the Queen-Mother confided her daughter, and albeit the seas ran mountains high and the heavens were black with tempest, the said de Maillé incontinent set sail, and so, after many perils, cast anchor off the coast of Brittany, where the little princess was safely disembarked and sent on by easy stages to the court of France at Saint Germain-en-Laye.

"Well played, i' faith!" laughs the King, long and loud. And how about the English fleet, you ask, my masters? *Par la Mordieu!* that was rolling about finely in the trough of the sea outside Calais, expecting every moment to overhaul our wily navigator, the said Commander Nicolas, and the precious booty along with him.

To his other qualities, good, bad, and indifferent, Henry the Second added a strong dash of the mulish; an idea, once fixed in that long, narrow head of his, took firm root.

Among his cherished prejudices, shared in this case by the French at large, was a lively aversion he had conceived at first sight for his pale young Italian wife. At best, it was murmured, she had stolen into the country under false pretences; for who, out of Italy, could forecast that the hearty young Dauphin should die as he did without warning (after swallowing a cup of cold water flavoured by an Italian hand), and so leave place on the throne for this Princess of Florence?

But Catherine's star was not one destined to twinkle in obscurity. Through good report and through evil it shone on, ever in the ascendant. Even the King's distaste of her, or rather Diana's jealous satisfaction therein, served its turn by enabling her to cling to her rights in France during the critical ten years of her early married life, before the birth of her children. They were years of hard schooling for a proud spirit, of grovelling humiliation and deceit which did not fail to leave their mark. Scarcely out of childhood herself, an alien among the haughty French nobility of the sword, who made small count of her mercantile extraction, burdened, moreover, by secret instructions from home interlined with covert threats, she lived in perpetual dread of the deed of separation which would have sent her ignominiously back to her own people like a damaged bale of that costly Florentine silk which figures so largely in the court expenditure of the time.

With our present knowledge of Catherine's character it is difficult to figure the dreadful heroine of the Saint Bartholomew as an inoffensive and self-effaced young person, clinging desperately for protection to the skirts of her husband's arrogant mistress. Madam, indeed, had not a more humble, devoted follower in her

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train, one who covered her with sweeter blandishments or more adroit flattery, particularly in presence of the King. Sometimes, but rarely, outraged pride got the better of policy; and once, we are told, in a moment of weakness Catherine confided her distress to the Seigneur de Tavannes, whose memoirs are preserved. That downright young soldier offered promptly to cut off the Valentino's handsome nose, and so put an end to her sorceries. The favourite was then a woman of forty, yet still in full flower of her majestic beauty. As for Messieurs of Lorraine, astute schemers though they were; they failed obviously, at this period, to discover any possible contingency by which the friendless young Queen could be turned to account either for good or evil in their far-reaching plans. They treated her contemptuously, and made an egregious mistake, as time proved. Years after, the Papal Nuncio, Santa-Croce, wrote to Rome: "We must take for an infallible maxim that the Queen-Mother detests this Cardinal of Lorraine above all other men living; and it is understood that she has cause for her dislike. Among other things, during the lifetime of Francis the Second the Queen of Scotland is said to have twitted her on the score of her birth, declaring that she was no better than a tradesman's daughter; and 'tis believed these words were suggested by the said Cardinal."

But in the days of her small beginning Catherine permitted herself no such luxury of hating. Gentle and observant, she listened rather than talked; lent an attentive ear to the noisy brag of soldiers, to the conversation of ambassadors; was interested in despatches, and in religious speculation, and curious to hear the courtiers gossip of secret gallantries and treachery. Already she possessed a naïve

charm of her own, and was endowed with the fascinating smile, the sweet and caressing voice, and natural eloquence which afterwards rendered her personal influence especially redoubtable. With the birth of children the Queen's position became more tenable, though it did not alter her modest attitude. She was now, to all appearance, absorbed in the care of these ailing little beings, whose health from their cradle gave rise to continual inquietude. Of the ten born to her in less than that number of years, Margaret alone could be counted absolutely sound in mind and body. The others, fair in outward show as those hectic fruits which hide a secret blight, were more or less afflicted by strange and nameless maladies, indicative of a tainted blood and a failing race.

At Saint Germain's, the Little Court, so called in distinction from the Great Court of the King and Madame de Valentino, was under Catherine's direct control. Here, at least, within limits, she was free to exercise her dominating ambition, and the subtle Italian spirit, which, for the rest, knew how to bide its time,—*odiate e aspettate*, to hate and wait.

"In those days," writes the quaint author of *LA VIE, MORT, ET TOMBEAU DE PHILIPPE DE STROZZI*, "there was nurtured at Saint Germain's, under the Queen's care, together with Monseigneur le Dauphin, and Messeigneurs his brothers, and Mesdames his sisters, besides the Queen of Scots (one time Queen of our France), a great store of noble infants, picked from the princely houses of the realm. Pleasant it was, of a verity, and right joyous, to see this little court, which remained apart and stationary, for most times in residence at the Forêt-en-Laye; whereas that of His Majesty changed continually, ambulating from castle to castle. Truly this was a school

for good manners and generous exercises, particularly when Monseigneur the Dauphin, and the young nobility about him, began to wax in years, and were prepared to receive instruction in dancing, leaping, and the dexterous use of arms, besides the study of letters, music, painting, mathematics, engineering, and such-like honourable sciences, suited to their noble estate."

It is not to be supposed that under Catherine's fostering care the girls' education was any more neglected than their brothers. Margaret of Valois boasts that before six years of age she was past mistress of the complete art of coquetry. Each soft-cheeked damsel must needs have her chosen esquire whose business it was to wear her colours, run her errands, in short to wait upon her in every emergency. The poor little Dauphin Francis served his apprenticeship in these chivalrous games to Madam Mary of Scotland, and by the same token must frequently have been more in need of succour on his own account than capable of affording it to his high-spirited companion. The Queen's Maries also figure in a barely decipherable court list of this time: Mary Beaton, Mary Seton, Mary Livingstone, and Mary Fleming; the latter, "very young and fair," presently relegated to a convent by Diana's jealous interposition. After the Saint Bartholomew Queen Catherine is reported to have remarked tranquilly that, so far as her own conscience was concerned, there were not upon it more than four or five murders. The cruel intrigue which led to Mary Fleming's undoing was not likely, then, to rest heavily, though what particular satisfaction could have been snatched from its transitory success would be curious to learn.

Meanwhile she watched over her little world at Saint Germain with unceasing vigilance; always smiling, kind

and caressing, yet hard as the hand of steel in velvet glove. One and all were taught on entering life that their first duty was to obey the Queen their mistress, to love her, fear her, regard her as an unfailing power and donor of every gift. "I hardly dared speak to her," writes Margaret; "and when she looked at me I trembled lest I might have done something to displease her." Equally submissive were the three Henriess,—of Valois, of Navarre, and of Lorraine. We are told of the futile efforts Charles the Ninth made to escape. Often, it is said, when following the chase at Saint Germain, he would prick his horse as if pursued by furies, driving headlong at every obstacle; yet fast and far as the unhappy boy fled, often by paths that taxed the boldest huntsman, there, close on his tracks, smiling as ever, and fixing upon him the cold Medicis eye, rode his evil genius. And it was of a piece that this violent exercise, while nothing short of death to the sickly young King, should be particularly beneficial to Catherine, retarding as it did the obesity which gained upon her in later life, and helped to clog her keen faculties.

Among Catherine's docile pupils Mary Stuart seems to have been the least tractable. She certainly emancipated herself early from the Queen's tutelage, either by natural hardness or through her uncle's influence. Nevertheless, in her case as in others, the race was for the strong. Hardly had Francis breathed his last, and the Guises fallen from power, than the young widow received pretty clear intimation that it was not well for her to stay in France. But in the interval what marvellous self-control must have been the Italian's under provocation of that insolent young beauty. We learn that at her son's marriage with the Scottish Queen she bestowed on the latter,

accompanied by every mark of joy and satisfaction, a valuable collection of pearls which had formed part of her own rich wedding outfit. These are the very jewels, perhaps, which lend their lustre to Mary's charms in that ideal world where she still queens it. They gleam across the pages of romance bright as the day when first they clasped her warm white throat, or trembled to the beat of her heart. Their pale splendour adorns alike the bridal veil and the black robe of execution; not forgetting the bewitching cap, which was another acquisition, by the way, she owed to the tradesman's daughter. In point of fact pearls are among the most perishable of treasures, and it is hardly probable that one precious drop of Mary's *parure* now remains in existence. "But where are the snows of yester-year?" comes back Villon's plaintive refrain.

Insolent and ungrateful as Mary was, she studied none the less diligently out of her preceptor's book, conned it, admired, and imitated. No apter pupil could be desired, nor was any child of Catherine's own more worthy such a mother, or the serpent-nest that bred her. When forced to quit the shores of her beloved France, she sailed away into exile, followed by tears and madrigals, and uttering that touching cry which finds an echo in every heart, "Farewell, my young days, my happy days, farewell for ever!" This tender young princess did not forget to carry with her, hidden in her white bosom, the Italian's secret, the poisoned perfume and the assassin's dagger.

One turns with impatience from those wooden likenesses of Mary Stuart which are still preserved, to picture her in the glowing language of her poets and lovers. "Who has not been led astray in the glamour cast by that pale prison rose?" cries

Michelet. "Our most learned and conscientious historians fall under the spell; nor could I have escaped were it not for damning proof on proof, lately brought to light, which now reveal the fatal fairy in her true colours, a danger to the whole world." Older by a year than her future husband, the young Dauphin, she possessed in perfection the physical health which he so sorely lacked. The radiance of her glance, the mingled snow and carnation of her complexion, were subjects of continual encomium. Later, under the transparent folds of her white widow's veil, the delicate pallor which succeeded this first brilliance of the opening rose roused still louder enthusiasm. "Contend as it might for precedence, the artifice of her veil could not compare with the dazzling snow of her complexion," Brantôme raves. The latter we know for a prodigious squire of dames, and one well versed in courtly periphrase; yet even he (though hard it seems to believe him) confesses himself at a loss for words sufficiently fine to depict those seductive charms which afterwards so scandalised the grim Scotch lords of the Reformation. "This is no Christian," they muttered; "'tis that pagan idol, Diana, worshipped of old of the Ephesians."

The exact tint of Mary's hair has been always a vexed subject of discussion. Some give it an unmitigated red, Michelet, for instance, who so far forgets himself and history as to call the poor lady a great red camel; others, siding with chivalrous Sir Walter, boldly endow their martyred queen and mistress with rich dark-brown tresses. It should not be forgotten, however, that red hair, even modest auburn, suffered a severe eclipse during the early years of our century, whereas under the Valois no

one with any pretensions to elegance could be seen wearing it black. In this particular, at least, Mary Stuart must have had the advantage of Queen Margot, who inherited her father's dark colouring, and was reduced to dissemble nature's shortcomings by the perruquier's art. We are told of three gigantic blonde lackeys kept in her service, and brought to the shears as regularly as sheep. Brantôme, indeed, protests that his incomparable princess could carry with grace "even her natural black hair, twisted and plaited à l'Espagnol, as she sometimes wore it, in imitation of her sister the Queen of Spain." But no such need of insistence, one feels, when he comes to praise the curled golden tresses of the Scottish Queen. "Alas!" he cries, "what profanation was that at the dreadful moment of her death when the barbarous executioner snatched her bonnet, and there lay revealed those same fair locks, now whitened, thin, and wintry, which her friends of France had so often seen to admire, curled and adorned as befitted their beauty and the queen they graced." For the rest, Ronsard, Jodelle, Baif, and others of the courtly suite (eye-witnesses for the most part), are unanimous in ascribing to Mary tresses golden as the sun's rays, which cast dark beauty into shade as day eclipses night. One and all, moreover, as in duty bound, prostrate themselves before her beautiful white hand (*cette belle main blanche*), praising, as who shall praise best, its delicate tapering fingers, Aurora's very own, wherewith she touched the lute, harpsichord, and other musical instruments, attuning them to the sound of her sweet voice, the better to enthrall and lead captive all mankind.

"In that court of the Second Henry," writes a modern French essayist, "of which Rabelais, Mon-

taigne, and Brantôme resume for us the naïve materialism of morals, the strange preoccupation of spirit, science was the rage of the hour. Women rivalled men in learning, excelled them indeed, since they had more leisure at their disposal, and were more obedient to the dictates of fashion." And here again, in learning as in beauty, the young Queen of Scots outstripped all competitors, plucking the fair fruits of science as it were for merest sport. Two hours daily the key of her closet was turned, and that brief space, stolen from the pleasures of her age, was devoted to study, and the perusal in their original of such masters as Virgil, Horace, Ariosto, and Petrarch. At fourteen she declaimed before the whole Court a Latin oration of her own composition. Its theme, freely translated, was, "Should women be taught the alphabet?" and no one but will be gratified to learn that this fair young advocate of women's progress carried the point of her argument affirmatively, with infinite grace.

King Henry rejoiced greatly in the young beauty's learning. He was not much of a classical scholar himself, yet he could lay some claim to academic honours on the score of athletics, in which he actually excelled. The modern science of boating was then, of course, unknown; but there was no lack of glorious striving in other noble sports. The *Sieur de Tavannes* boasts in his memoirs of having broken sixty lances in one day, and of dancing afterwards all night; though we are led to infer that a certain ointment, or salve, of singular virtue, wherewith the said noble seigneur lubricated his manly biceps, had some share in the remarkable feat. In his plan of Saint Germain Francis the First had not neglected to provide a spacious ballroom, which was considered at the time one of the finest and most commodious ever built. After serving for

many years the ignoble uses of barrack and prison, this noble saloon has lately been restored to its original proportions, and appears at present a long, rather narrow, apartment facing the west with eight, or more, beautifully proportioned windows set back in deep embrasures. Compared with the grandiose splendour of Versailles, Saint Germain's historic banquetting-hall strikes the visitor as almost homely. It is pervaded by the mellow hues of old red brick, and harbours an immense open fireplace where the salamander, Francis's symbol of love and glory, disports at large. Time and hard usage have more than a little warped the beams underfoot; and the countless tiny octagonal tiles which cover the floor rise and fall in dizzy undulations more suggestive of the rolling deep than of terpsichorean feats.

Pleasure, like everything else under the Valois, was taken in heroic doses. A full-dress ball began shortly after midday, and dragged out its long-drawn sweetness, with interludes of masques, music, games, and processions, far into the small hours of the morning, fortified opportunely by a substantial supper. These were the occasions for feminine display and rivalry, franker in its expression then, if no more genuine, than the same sort of thing now. To believe her panegyrists, Mary Stuart queened it by right of beauty as well as right divine. When she took part in a ballet, or followed the torchlight dance, or, better still, stepped out in a *pavane* of Italy (imported, like all things inimitable, from beyond the mountains), every man there, from king to lackey, trod on each other's heels in their efforts to catch sight of this triumphant beauty. Behold her now pluming herself for conquest; advancing, retreating, gliding past with long sideling steps, mincing and ruff-

ing, or spreading wide her skirts of stiff gold brocade like some magnificent peacock to the sun. Every voice proclaims the peerless goddess Aurora fairly eclipsed.

Yet there was always that one dis-sentient note. Madame Catherine of Medicis wrote drily about this time: "Our little queenlet of Scotland has but to smile to turn all these French heads." It was an evil hour for Mary, though she may not have suspected it, which made her Queen of France, when Henry persisted in breaking one more lance with his stout captain of the guards. The King doted on the golden-haired girl, and would have her by him at every leisure moment. Nothing drove away black care, which sits brooding on kings' shoulders, like the sight of the young princess flinging away in one of her wild Highland reels: "As I have seen her myself, many a time," Brantôme declares, "dressed in native costume, *à la sauvage*, yet appearing withal (be not incredulous when I tell you) a very goddess in mortal frame"; in other words, we presume, a goddess in tartans. Ronsard and Jodelle, zealous as ever to perform their part, translated for her and for the King's pleasure, those wild and haunting melodies of the north which we know; and these she committed to memory, singing them to the accompaniment of her lyre in a voice surpassing sweet.

During the continuance of fine weather, diversions in the open air were of frequent occurrence in the forest of Saint Germain's. To this day the sites of green amphitheatres may still be traced, and the remains of stone seats, "quarried and set about expressly for the repose and accommodation of spectators." We are told of a fair chamber contrived out of intertwined ivy leaves, and carpeted with green-sward, which was erected on one of the river islets. Also of a magnificent

festival held in the forest itself, under hanging boughs, and surrounded by secret grottoes whence, to the music of hautbois, violin, timbrel, and bagpipe, issued troops of shepherds and shepherdesses dressed in the costumes of the different parts of France, who set themselves to dance right joyously in an open glade the various dances of the provinces which they represented. From time immemorial, however, it is evident that *al fresco* entertainments have suffered under some malign influence, and they were no more free from interruption in the sixteenth century than we are apt to find them under our own cloudy skies. Margaret of Valois recounts the disaster which overtook one such festal occasion arranged in her honour by Don John of Austria. "Of a verity," she cries gaily, "the heavens must have grown jealous of our too great contentment, for suddenly, out of a clear sky, they burst over us in such a tempest of wind and rain as drove everything before it. All the same, we took our revenge, for next day, in recounting the ridiculous adventures brought about by the confusion of our retreat, we found as much amusement as we had in the first instance experienced of delight and satisfaction."

A DISCOURSE, PUBLISHED WITH PRIVILEGE (Paris, 1559), describes at length the splendid rejoicings over Mary Stuart's marriage with the French Dauphin. It was celebrated, as in duty bound, at Paris, whither all the world flocked to make hay while the sun shone. There was largess of silver pennies in the streets, and much spilling of good wine, red and white, not to mention processions, tournaments, and midnight revels. Pages are devoted to the description of a superb ball and masque held within the precincts of the ancient feudal residence of the Kings of France, the Castle of Tournelles, of

which no vestige now remains to mark its hundred towers and curious ramifications over half Paris. After their marriage the youthful pair do not appear to have frequented Saint Germain. They had left behind childhood and childhood's innocent play, and the grim game of life now entered upon necessitated a more secure retreat than their forest castle afforded. Catherine also avoided the spot, having received warning from one of her astrologers that its conjunction was of evil omen for her. Long after, when dying at Blois, she resigned herself to the inevitable with characteristic stoicism on learning the name of the priest in attendance, one Abbé de Saint Germain.

Francis and Mary, under Lorraine tutorage, held their court at Blois and Amboise, which became the theatre of their brief but sanguinary reign. A year later, when the unfortunate Queen was forced to take her final departure from France, a crowd of disconsolate young lords and weeping ladies accompanied her as far as Calais, where she embarked. "So long as daylight lasted," writes her faithful chronicler, "and land remained in sight, this sweet princess could not be persuaded to quit her post on deck, but looking towards France with streaming eyes repeated again and again, 'Farewell, my France, dear land of France, farewell for ever!'"

What part the poets took in that memorable leave-taking may be easily conjectured. Gallant de Maison-Fleur, for one, seizing upon the accident of a cold and ungenial spring, maintains in many melodious stanzas that nature herself hath gone into mourning at the loss of their most rare princess. Reams of verses, wherein the four seasons of the year, the floral calendar, heaven and earth and heathen mythology are ransacked to do her honour, still exist, though, as the French say,

à peine. We skim at our ease these ornate poesies and euphonies which doubtless cost the tuneful Pleiades many sleepless nights and days of laborious travail. But Queen Mary herself, and this is more to the point, never wearied of perusing them. Often, we are told, when in exile and prison, she was seen walking apart, the verses in her hands, which she bedewed with her fast falling tears.

Did the fair Queen vouchsafe as much for poor, love-lorn Chastelard, and his poetic effusions? If so history makes no mention of it. "Yet for certain 'twas a right gallant cavalier," Brantôme declares, who knew my Lord of Chastelard well in France before his madness fell upon him; "a man of good sword and good letters." Of good blood also, since he could claim kinship on his mother's side with the Chevalier Bayard, whom he was said to resemble in appearance. Alas, fond lovers all! Let every one drop the tear of pity so cruelly denied this hapless gentleman of Dauphiné by "the most beautiful and most cruel princess on earth."

Among the many who ring their changes on Mary's charms none strike a sweeter note than Ronsard. His beautiful lines, inspired by the young Queen as she appeared to him one day in her white widow's weeds, pacing a forest path, are as fresh as the hour they were written. An exquisite hour it was, fragrant with early dews, and flowers scarce yet unfolded "by the little acolytes of Zephyr," to quote from good Father Amyot. Under

the poet's charm we are wafted for a moment out of our garish world, and standing apart in some dim leafy spot watch with his eyes this lovely apparition gliding between the trees. So young, so fair, she seems, yet already touched by grief, as if an angel had wept. Downcast her gaze, whiter than snow-white veil the pure young brow; and as she advances, lost in pensive reverie, the very trees that line her path, rugged oak, lofty pine, and all the sylvan forest growth, incline on either side, bending low as before something holy.

Another of Mary's French admirers was that noble Michel de l'Hospital, Chancellor of France, who carried the lilies unspotted through dark days of his country's history. Her epithalamium was composed by his pen, in sonorous Latin numbers as befitted his magisterial gravity. We know how this high-minded statesman (conscience-keeper of a wicked world) was constrained ere long to repudiate his muse, denouncing where formerly he had worshipped. The same hand which welcomed Mary, bride of France and queen of every heart,—

Tantus in ore decor, majestas regia tanta est!—

depicts her in a second poem, but changed indeed from that dazzling bridal splendour. Darkness and shapes of horror encompass the scene where now she steals, the Furies on her track; a Clytemnestra, murderess of her lawful spouse, father of the child still at her breast.

THE LIVING OF EAST WISPERS.

I.

EAST WISPERS, at this time, was in the prayers of the unbeneficed clergy of the diocese. "I wish the Bishop would offer it to you, Wilfrid," Mrs. Hepburn said.

"I hardly think that is likely, Caroline. It is an important living; and there are so many able men waiting for preferment."

"Most of them watch as well as wait; some of them act," said Mrs. Hepburn. She knitted in silence awhile. Mr. Hepburn drew down the blind, the sun being in his wife's eyes; he was an acute observer of little things, as touching those he loved. "Why is it, Wilfrid, that the Bishop has ignored your claims all these years?"

"I don't know, Caroline. My—claims?" said Mr. Hepburn, absently.

"He persistently passes you over, as if you were of no account. It would make me angry if I were a man. It is far from considerate of him to expect you to be always a curate; and a new vicar might turn you adrift; it is often done, when they bring their own curates, or have daughters, and prefer unmarried men."

"Caroline!"

"Well, you know what happened at St. Peter's; though, to be sure, nothing came of that experiment, I am glad to say."

"Caroline!"

"And Mr. Lane was a long time out before he got the workhouse chaplaincy; nor was that the Bishop's appointment. His policy appears to be to give good livings only to rich men."

"I have heard his lordship remark

on the disadvantages of a poor beneficed clergy," Mr. Hepburn said. "He means well, I am sure."

"I dare say he does. There is a place said to be paved with good intentions. I have thought what a very pathetic pavement that must be."

"Caroline!"

Mrs. Hepburn blushed and held down her head; she had hardly meant to say this bitter thing. She was a stout, healthy lady, and had something of a style in walk and manner. She would have made an admirable provincial Mayoress; and she had been known (in Mr. Hepburn's absence) to smile at mild profanity. She was too robust to have visions; passing Sisters of Mercy in the street, Mrs. Hepburn would raise her handsome head, in a kind of instinctive pitying wonderment, as one who should say, *Foolish, foolish virgins!* "The Bishop," she went on, "seems to think nothing of long and devoted service. I have induced Mr. Grant two or three times to write appreciatively of you in *THE HERALD*, and the page (marked) has been sent to him; but he has taken no notice."

"Mr. Grant has been most obliging, and I have reason to believe that he holds me in some esteem," said Mr. Hepburn. "But, Caroline, a reporter, even though he is a member of our choir, can scarcely be expected to write in such a manner as would influence the Bishop. His lordship, moreover, I believe, has a prejudice against newspapers."

"I have seen him delay a meeting till the reporters came," Mrs. Hepburn observed.

"He may have had some momentous announcement to make."

Mrs. Hepburn sighed. "Still, I do think something ought to be done for you, Wilfrid. There might be some hope for us if the Bishop, when he visits the town, would call and have tea with us, instead of always going to the houses of the rich people. I should take care to let him hear something that would open his eyes. It seems to me," said Mrs. Hepburn, with a break in her voice, "that even the Church is against the poor. The children are growing up, and of course, Wilfrid, our expenses increase. I keep things from you as much as I can. But Selina and Alice are become old enough to notice how other children are dressed; and, though I do not complain of this, I have not had a new gown for two years. If it were not for my brother I don't know what we should do."

"Caroline," said Mr. Hepburn anxiously, "I shall not need that overcoat this winter."

"You must look respectable, Wilfrid; it is more important in your case than in ours. What do you think the Bishop would say if he were to see you dressed shabbily? Cast him forth into outer darkness—"

"Oh Caroline, Caroline!"

"And then I can still make a point of going out only on wet days, when Gerald's fine cloak covers a multitude of sins. I can't work to-day," Mrs. Hepburn exclaimed; "I feel so peevish somehow."

"The weather is very trying," said Mr. Hepburn.

"It is not that, Wilfrid; it is East Wispers. Ah, dear, I wish you could understand that this hand-to-mouth existence is unjust to you and to us, and that it will continue until you move on your own behalf. Living after living falls vacant, and nothing

comes our way. The Bishop might at least be given a little gentle reminder. I should like to be a friend of his pelican daughter; they say he proposes and she disposes. Thus the Church typifies Providence. Oh, I am not saying this to shock you, Wilfrid; but I have often wished that you were not so proud and sensitive. And I can't really see what harm there would be in speaking to the Bishop about East Wispers. It is in his gift, and he may not, after all, know that you have been so shamefully neglected. Wilfrid, I am utterly tired of this dull, hopeless monotony of life; this miserable struggle, year after year, to make ends meet and keep out of debt. We are actually worse off than many of the working people in the parish, and then the cruel mockery of our respectability!" Mrs. Hepburn rose, and made a magnificent figure at the window. "I spent a day at East Wispers rectory before I married you," she said; "and when I recall that delightful place—"

"Caroline, I can't speak to the Bishop!" Mr. Hepburn cried.

She turned; his face was in his hands. "It is frequently done, Wilfrid. There is nothing disgraceful in making a reasonable request. If you were in any other profession you would have no hesitation in asking for advancement. Mr. Jardine, I am told, was at the Palace on Tuesday, and can you doubt that he went to urge his claims?"

Mr. Hepburn looked up. "Jardine?" he said. "You must have been misinformed, Caroline. It was Jardine who wrote that letter in *THE HERALD* on the need of a suffragan Bishop for the diocese; an extremely strong letter to my mind."

"It was rude and malicious, a spiteful letter," Mrs. Hepburn said.

"I should call it hasty and perhaps

unsympathetic," Mr. Hepburn admitted, "remembering the Bishop's great age. And, having sent such a communication to the public press, Jardine would scarcely go to his lordship to ask a favour."

"Did he tell you he wrote it? It was anonymous."

"No; young Grant told me; he said he read it in manuscript before it appeared. Jardine was so particular about it that he went to the office to see the proof. The Bishop, I understand, is much displeased at its appearance, as it insinuates (not too felicitously, I think,) that he is getting too old for the adequate administration of the diocese. That is a subject on which his lordship is exceedingly susceptible. Mr. Medway was telling me that at the last Diocesan Conference he playfully questioned the Bishop as to whether there was any truth in the rumour that a suffragan was to be appointed, and his lordship cried out, 'Not a word, not a word!' in quite a spirited way, and appeared to be greatly offended at the suggestion. It was injudicious, no doubt," Mr. Hepburn added, "of Grant to disclose, even to me, the authorship of the letter; but of course, Caroline, you will not betray his confidence."

"Certainly not; I don't suppose I shall think about it again. But if Mr. Jardine, after behaving in so ungentlemanly a way, could go to the Bishop, why should you hesitate, Wilfrid?"

Mr. Hepburn shook his head.

"Wilfrid, I should not mind speaking to the Bishop myself."

"That,—that would never, *never* do, Caroline!"

"I should really like to go, as I feel so sure I could persuade him to do something for us; if not now, then perhaps soon—"

"No, no, Caroline; you must not

think of such a thing; it would be most unbecoming and unprecedented."

Mrs. Hepburn pulled up the blind, rather slowly, as though thinking of something, and stood in the sunshine. A young man passing raised his hat; she gave him a charming smile. "It is not easy," she said, "in the midst of deepening poverty, to regard precedent as quite sacred."

"The Bishop would be shocked," Mr. Hepburn cried.

But to herself Mrs. Hepburn said: "I should like to so shock the old gentleman. It could not make matters worse than they are."

II.

CARRIAGES were in waiting at the town-hall; the Bishop's was drawn up under the portico. Four o'clock was come; the meeting, every one but the reforming layman seemed to think, had already been unreasonably long. The Bishop (having renounced all affection to enthusiasm) leaned towards the secretary, who lowered his head reverentially. "This," whispered the Bishop, "is the gentleman's fourth amendment. How do we stand? Is it possible for him to amend anything else?" The secretary smiled. "I hope," said the Bishop, "he will have done reforming us out of existence in time for me to catch the next train." The secretary coughed; the Dean coughed; the Archdeacon (roused from a pleasant nap) coughed also, to show that he had been taking an intelligent interest in the proceedings. But the layman with ideas would be a-talking; he was young, not timid, and turned so deaf an ear to episcopal snubs that curates gasped, and hardened vicars imagined humorous things. The end came at last, quite suddenly; the right-reverend chairman stopped a proposed vote of thanks to himself. "If," observed his lordship, "we

would all do more and talk less, the Church at large would undoubtedly benefit." And as the clergy and laity, with many sighs of relief, rose, Mrs. Hepburn made her way to the Bishop. He received her with the ripened courtesy of assured greatness, and invited her to walk with him along the corridor. There was no time to lose; the Archdeacon was toddling behind, carrying a big black bag; so the lady, in eloquent urgency, and with some pathos, made her appeal. "I trust," she added, "I have not given offence to your lordship in mentioning this."

"Not at all, not at all; ladies are privileged persons," said the Bishop. He smiled pleasantly, and folded his hands high up on his breast. With every other step he raised his fine old head, as if determined to make these people understand that he was not beginning to stoop. "At the same time, Mrs. Hepburn, I regret I cannot offer you any positive assurance on the subject. Mr. Hepburn has not been forgotten. East Wispers has given us most anxious thought, to my daughter in particular, I may say, since the diocese owes so much to her; and we have got so far as the selection of two clergymen who appear to be most suited for this arduous parish; namely, your husband and Mr. Jardine."

"Mr. Jardine!" Mrs. Hepburn exclaimed involuntarily.

"While fully recognising," said the Bishop, "your husband's many excellent qualities, I cannot avoid the conclusion that Mr. Jardine has an advantage over him in having acquired just the experience which seems peculiarly to mark him out for such a parish."

"Mr. Jardine is unmarried, my lord. And your lordship may be aware that he is—not poor."

"Yes; that is in his favour. In

the existing circumstances of the Church, when our schools make so great a demand on our resources, by reason of the ever-increasing faithlessness of the State, I am strongly of opinion that a parish clergyman should possess an independent income. This may appear hard; but the interests of the Church cannot be subordinated to personal feeling."

"Mr. Jardine is very young, my lord; and,—we have a large family. If it were not for my brother's kindness, we could scarcely live in a manner becoming Mr. Hepburn's high calling."

"I am sorry to hear that; I hear it so frequently, and it always grieves me," said the Bishop. "It is a most urgent and weighty problem, this upon which you touch; and I fail to comprehend how it is to be solved otherwise than by a larger and more consistent generosity on the part of the laity."

They had reached the street; a footman opened the door of the Bishop's carriage; the Archdeacon put the black bag on the seat.

"Then, my lord, we must give up all hope!" Mrs. Hepburn murmured.

"Oh, no, no. Nothing has yet been definitely decided, beyond the selection of what we consider the two most suitable persons. It will be one or the other. In any event, Mr. Hepburn may expect to hear from me. Pray assure him of my regard."

"The station," said the Archdeacon, helping the Bishop into the carriage.

"The workhouse, unless I do something," Mrs. Hepburn said to herself bitterly.

III.

On a misty warm morning, four days later, Mr. Hepburn (who had been taking the early celebration)

came home looking pathetically pale and visionary. This, in Mrs. Hepburn's phrase, was his apostolic mood; and his remoteness at such times depressed her indefinitely, making her feel isolated and vagrant, as though they had been going in opposite directions all their married life. She had waited to breakfast with him, and he sat down to the table with a sacrificial air, which made her think of John the Baptist and locusts and wild honey. The bacon and eggs struck her as being curiously incongruous, and instinctively she pushed the dry toast towards him. The children were gone to school, and an unwonted quiet reigned in the house.

The talk was conventional for some while; Mr. Hepburn spoke mournfully of a young lady whose manner of going to the altar to communicate had deeply wounded his sense of Anglican propriety; then, somewhat abruptly abbreviating the ritual question, Mrs. Hepburn remarked on a sudden, there had been no news from the Bishop yet.

"I do not suppose I have been in his lordship's thoughts," Mr. Hepburn said, in his preoccupied simple way. "The Vicar appears to think that Mr. Jardine will be offered East Wispers."

"That is impossible now," Mrs. Hepburn said. "Quite impossible!"

The words tugged at Mr. Hepburn's innocence, and brought him out of the clouds. "Why do you think so?" he asked.

"Mr. Jardine's chances of East Wispers are at an end." This she said in a kind of desperation. "I have effectually stopped his ambition in that quarter."

"Caroline, you cannot have seen the Bishop?"

"I have seen him," Mrs. Hepburn replied.

"Then—oh, Caroline, it is not possible that you can have betrayed Mr. Grant's confidence in me?"

"I spoke to the Bishop when he was in the town last week. Yes; I mentioned East Wispers, and explained to him briefly about ourselves. I gave him to understand that I was acting solely on my own initiative. He told me that the choice lay between you and Mr. Jardine. I was strongly moved to acquaint him with the authorship of the anonymous letter in *THE HERALD*, but I refrained. There was no opportunity, and it was clear to me that more convincing proof was required. Wilfrid, can't you understand how natural it was for me to wish to do the best for you? I hope I have been a good wife——"

"Yes, yes, Caroline; but it was unwise to speak to the Bishop. You cannot believe, on reflection, that it was in commendable taste."

"I have been so worried of late I have not had time to reflect."

"And then," said Mr. Hepburn, "you seem to have done something besides. What is it you have done, Caroline?"

"I may as well tell you everything now, Wilfrid. You will be grieved, I dare say; but all this is a heavier burden on my mind than I imagined it would be. I could not sleep last night. Indeed, I held back for two days before I could find courage to do it. Yet I don't say I am ashamed; it was absolutely necessary to do something, for the world is against us,—the world in the Church, where it expresses itself in the most torturing refinements of cruelty; and after all I have done nothing worse than fight it with its own weapons."

"Tell me, tell me," Mr. Hepburn pleaded.

"Well, I called on Mr. Grant,—you know how devoted he is to you—and induced him to obtain for me the

manuscript of Mr. Jardine's letter to his paper. I may not, perhaps, have been perfectly frank with him, and of course I feel sorry for that, and will some day apologise to him; but I do not see that I need be sorry for anything else. He was kind enough to bring the manuscript to me. It was in Mr. Jardine's handwriting, and I have sent it to the Bishop."

Mr. Hepburn did not speak at once. He seemed like a man to whom a thing has happened beyond his comprehension. His chest fell in, and he sat with his ascetic white hands on the arms of his chair, like a copy of death. "It was a crime, Caroline. You tempted the young man to commit a theft."

"Wilfrid!"

"He took what did not belong to him. He may be sent to prison."

"But, Wilfrid, the manuscript was of no use to any one."

"You have put it to a dreadful use. I do not reproach you; we are one, Caroline; we have had many troubles, and have borne them hand in hand. But regard this as we may, it is a very, very serious breach of confidence."

"Mr. Grant would not betray me."

"He may not be able to help himself. Something is sure to come of this. The Bishop's sense of duty, his abhorrence of wrong-doing, may prevent him from keeping silent."

"Wilfrid, you frighten me! You can't believe that I would sanction anything in the nature of a crime? Oh, I confess I may have been reckless and over-anxious; but it was for your sake and the children's,—and he would never bring my name into it!"

"The papers were not his to give to you or to any one. He could not have come by them lawfully."

"He assured me they would not be

wanted; that they would never be missed; I think I promised to let him have them back again; it seemed possible, somehow. They were all crumpled and full of holes, and covered with black marks. I believe I told him he was not to run any risk on my account."

"That does not make his conduct the less culpable. Should the Bishop take action in the matter,—and I do not see how he can avoid doing so— young Grant, who has been so good to me in many ways, will be professionally ruined, even if the law is not invoked."

"Oh, Wilfrid, you make me feel utterly miserable. I acted thoughtlessly, I admit; but I did not think it could be so serious as you make out."

"When did you send the manuscript to the Bishop?"

"Only last night; I posted it myself, while you were at church."

"His lordship would receive it this morning. He may be reading it, in amazement and pain, at this very moment. Caroline, Caroline, this was not the way! We could never have been happy at East Wispers had we gone there by such methods. Last night, you say; I must go to the Bishop at once. There is a train in a few minutes. Did,—did you enclose a note of your own?"

"No; I merely put the manuscript in an envelope and addressed it to the Bishop at the Palace. I marked the envelope private,—at least, I think I did; I hardly knew what I was doing."

Mr. Hepburn had risen. "Last night," he said. "I remember you seemed so anxious. Can you give me money to pay the fare? Oh, Caroline, we must hope for the best. Hitherto God has been very merciful to us. Caroline, Caroline, we must not forget His loving-kindness."

IV

Roses after rain, and on the roses sunshine, and in the sunshine bees and butterflies; high gray walls, birds calling to their young, an atmosphere of the sun to-day and of the things of long ago; an old palace in an old garden, and in the garden this simple, contemplative gentleman, very miserable, very feeble, hopeless almost of prelatial forgiveness, yet tenderly resolute to make his appeal, whatever might come of it.

The cathedral bells rang; the cathedral spires rose high in the blue and white sky; a white-robed throng might be moving through the stately aisles, if one could see them. The elusive subtle romance of the religious life, the imaginative throb of great tradition, the note of sanctity in environment; these are not for all minds, but they were for Mr. Hepburn's. Yet not to-day; in a normal mood he would have lingered affectionately, smiling a thankfulness beyond expression, in this pleasant garden, seeing wonderful and beautiful things with the inward sense which is created and fed by the heavenly vision. But this timid man, of fragile, fine character, was sorely afflicted, and not all the beauty of all the Bishop's garden could give peace to his sad heart or ease the torment of his thoughts.

So Mr. Hepburn came at length to the place where he would be, to make his supplication; and white roses and red hung over him as he stood by the Palace door, the door through which prelates great and small had passed since the Saxon days, and the air was heavy with perfume. The Bishop, the footman told him, was in London; he had been speaking in the House of Lords on the night before, but he was expected home that morning; the carriage, indeed, had gone to the station for his lordship.

Mr. Hepburn expressing a wish to wait, the footman said in sympathy, "You seem tired, sir," and knowing him well, conducted him to the Bishop's study, and there left him.

The study was small and ancient, and seemed haunted by invisible saintly presences and the voices of wise men. The windows were open and looked out on the garden, and the breeze made the roses incline this way, as if they would be where wisdom dwelt. Mr. Hepburn, from the high-backed chair, which had been given him, let his eyes wander timorously about the room. He saw scarce anything in detail, yet was impressed deeply, as an epileptic prisoner (doubtful of the nature of his crime) might be in a Court of Assize. The minutes passed, and he grew more desolate and dreading. At last, his gaze resting on the Bishop's table (the only table in the room), he perceived there a heap of letters.

The letters were apparently unopened; they would be waiting till the Bishop should come. The curate knew how punctilious his Diocesan was about his correspondence. Nevertheless for some moments absolutely no speculation regarding the significance, the possibilities of this circumstance entered Mr. Hepburn's mind. His was a slow brain naturally; slower still to act where the opportunity of doubtful conduct was offered. On a sudden he raised his head in a startled nervous fashion, for it had occurred to him that, as the Bishop had been in London since the previous day, probably he had not seen Caroline's letter containing Mr. Jardine's manuscript.

Mr. Hepburn moved uneasily in his chair; he glanced towards the door, the window, and drew his hand across his brow in a bewildered way. The servant had shut the door; he was alone in the study. His eyes were

fixed again on the letters; he sighed heavily; a moisture appeared on his face. If Caroline's letter should be there!

He stood up; and as he moved to the table, the sound of carriage-wheels was heard. He was shaken spiritually rather than bodily; his hand did not tremble at all as it turned over the letters. Yes—here was Caroline's. He lifted it, held it over the other letters, his arm outstretched; then suddenly let it fall and stood gazing at it, like a man who felt that he was tampering with the wrath of God. Then the Bishop's voice came from the stair. Mr. Hepburn's hand touched the letter again, but was instantly withdrawn; his vital forces seemed paralysed. He uttered a low moan, and slid back to his chair, leaving the letter on the table.

The Bishop entered, and Mr. Hepburn (his hands on the rests of the chair) rose and bowed reverentially.

"Ah, good morning, Mr. Hepburn. You are an early riser too. I am pleased to see you."

The Bishop seated himself at the table. The servant placed a black bag on it, and left the study. Mr. Hepburn remained partially standing.

"Be seated, Mr. Hepburn, be seated. I am sure you won't mind my going on with my letters. I wished to see you. I hope Mrs. Hepburn is quite well."

"Thank you, my lord——"

The Bishop began to open his letters, using a little ivory paper-knife. He read each one as he opened it. Mrs. Hepburn's was the third which he took up. He thrust in the paper-knife.

"My lord——"

Mr. Hepburn had advanced a step. He held forth his hands in a pitiful imploring way. The Bishop, pausing in the act of taking out Mr. Jardine's manuscript, looked at him curiously.

"Yes, Mr. Hepburn? I think you are not well to-day."

"That letter, my lord, is from my wife."

"Indeed," said the Bishop. He smiled benignly. "I suppose it is about East Wispers. Mrs. Hepburn spo—— Aha, I must not betray a lady's confidence. Oh, no; oh, no; no, no. You have a careful and solicitous wife, Mr. Hepburn, an excellent wife. Oh, yes; oh, yes, yes, yes."

"My lord——" Mr. Hepburn moved up to the table as he spoke. "Might I beg of your lordship,—my lord, as a peculiar kindness to me personally—that you will not read my wife's letter?"

The Bishop looked at the superscription. "It is really from Mrs. Hepburn?" he said.

"Yes, my lord."

"Then—certainly; here is the letter," said the Bishop.

Mr. Hepburn put it in his pocket. "Thank you, my lord," he faltered in a profound humility. "And thank—thank God!" he added, raising his voice.

"Oh, it can't be so serious as that," the Bishop said, opening another letter. "After all, it was not unnatural that Mrs. Hepburn should desire to say a good word for you, though the practice is hardly openly to be encouraged. I have decided, Mr. Hepburn," the prelate added pleasantly, "to offer you the living of East Wispers, should you care to accept it."

"My lord——"

"I am sure Mrs. Hepburn will be pleased."

"My lord——"

"I have perfect confidence in you," said the Bishop. "So also has my daughter. Oh, yes; oh, yes, yes, yes. And I hope you will remember to take some of our roses to Mrs. Hepburn when you go home."

THE CENTENARY OF OSSIAN.

THE trial of James Macpherson for forgery and fraud may be said to have lasted a hundred years, from 1762 to 1862. The former date is the year of the publication of the first batch of the Ossianic poems; and the latter is the year in which was published *THE BOOK OF THE DEAN OF LISMORE*. Macpherson himself died in 1796, and the present year is therefore the centenary of his death. To understand the fury and bitterness of the Ossianic controversy, one of the fiercest of all literary fights, it is necessary to turn back for a moment into the political atmosphere of the eighteenth century.

There is an Act of Parliament of George the Second which clearly shows the attitude of the English mind towards the Scottish Highlanders in the eighteenth century. In that Act Parliament solemnly ordained that "from and after the 1st day of August, 1747, no man or boy within that part of Great Britain called Scotland, shall on any pretence whatever wear and put on the clothes commonly called Highland clothes, that is to say, the plaid, philibeg, or little kilt, trowse, shoulder-belt, or any part whatsoever of what peculiarly belongs to the Highland garb, and that no tartan or party-coloured plaid or stuff, shall be used for great coats or upper coats." The Act then went on to declare that if the smallest piece of tartan plaid could be detected among the garments of any Highland man or boy he should suffer six months' imprisonment, and for a second offence seven years' penal servitude. The oath of a single witness before a Justice of the Peace was enough to

effect a conviction. This attempt to "take the breeks off a Highlandman" by Act of Parliament grew immediately out of the terror inspired by the rebellion of 1745; but underlying and reinforcing the panic-stricken legislation there was the popular conviction that the Scottish mountains were inhabited by "black-kneed" cattle-thieves barely emerged from the cannibal state. The shopkeepers of Manchester and Derby after Prince Charlie's invasion retained vivid pictures of barbarous giants demanding at the point of a very long sword a bawbee, which, much to the profit of the invaders, the citizens, it is said, understood to be Gaelic for a guinea. To escape the general odium and contempt attaching to all things Celtic, not a few clansmen, driven south by the clearances and dispersions of the time, were obliged to change their name. Many a Smith of London and Glasgow is an expatriated Macgregor.

Into this medley of misconception about the Northern Celts came the Ossianic poems of 1762. It is worth recalling the preliminary circumstances that led to their publication. The third quarter of the eighteenth century brought to Scotland a period of domestic peace after two hundred and fifty years of all but continuous civil and religious strife. Then for the first time grew up a generation of men who knew not the faction-fights of rival religions and rival royalties. Among the cultivators of literature and philosophy which this time of leisured tranquillity brought forth in Edinburgh there were a few men whose sympathies were turned towards the Highlands; among others was the Reverend John

Home, author of the once famous tragedy of DOUGLAS. It was known, not to the educated public but to this small circle in the Scottish capital, that a mass of traditional literature, in prose and verse, was current among the Highlanders and Islesmen; and it was surmised that at least a portion of this traditional literature dated back to very ancient times, for the bards of the Celtic races had excited the wonder and admiration of more than one Roman writer. In Ireland and Wales English conquerors had well-nigh obliterated the bards and bardic institutions; but among the Caledonian Celts the bards, though a decadent race, had preserved to later times something of an apostolic succession. Looking round for means of tapping this Celtic literature, Home and his friends stumbled upon a young Badenoch Highlander who, from training and capabilities, seemed made to their hands. This was an Aberdeenshire schoolmaster named James Macpherson. The youth (he was only twenty-one at the time) had already shown his aptitude and inclinations both by publishing original verse and by collecting various fragments of traditional Gaelic poems. Macpherson was prevailed upon to translate the latter into English, and they were pronounced by Home and his literary friends to be a precious discovery. A subscription was immediately raised, and Macpherson, with three assistants, was despatched upon a tour of the Highlands and Isles with the view of collecting as much Celtic poetry as could be found, and publishing it in an English translation. No one seems to have thought then of suggesting the publication of the Gaelic originals, which is not surprising, seeing that probably not a soul outside the Celts themselves could read the language in those days. Macpherson and his assistants during

their tour collected a few manuscripts from the chiefs and others to whom they had introductions. But by far the greater quantity of the material they accumulated was composed of traditional songs and ballads, poems and stories taken down from the oral recitation of surviving remnants of bards, of herds and boatmen, of old men and women, and such others as become the repository of floating oral literature. At the end of two years a first instalment of the result of the commissioners' labours was given to the world under the title of FINGAL, AN ANCIENT EPIC POEM IN SIX BOOKS, TOGETHER WITH SEVERAL OTHER POEMS BY OSSIAN, THE SON OF FINGAL, TRANSLATED FROM THE GAELIC LANGUAGE BY JAMES MACPHERSON. Two years later, in 1764, Macpherson published a further batch of epic and dramatic pieces, purporting to be translations of poems by Ossian.

These publications very soon aroused the attention of literary men throughout Europe. The first feeling was one of surprise and perplexity. It was amazing, especially in that age of artificial writing, to see an ancient epic popping up like a Jack-in-the-box out of a No Man's Land. It seemed incredible that a blind old Highland bard should have composed sublime epic poems hundreds of years before any modern European nation had crept out of its cradle. In the controversy that followed England went to the north pole of criticism; Continental opinion took an opposite direction. The partisans of neither side addressed themselves dispassionately to the question of the origin of the poems. On the one hand vituperative personal abuse, and on the other extravagant admiration obscured the issues, so that both sides lost sight of the fundamental problem, which was briefly this: did Macpherson take the detached and isolated traditional ballads

and stories about the exploits of Fingal and his warriors, and then himself fuse them into one continuous epic poem; or did he find such a continuous epic already in existence in the Gaelic, and merely put the scattered fragments mechanically together and translate them into English? And further, how far was popular tradition correct in attributing either the Fingalian ballads and stories or the epic (if it existed) to a bard of the third or fourth century called Ossian? In other words, was Macpherson the Homer or the Pisistratus of the Ossianic poems; and if he was only the Gaelic Pisistratus, who was the Gaelic Homer? Instead of investigating these problems, the English critics promptly put Macpherson on his trial for fraud and forgery, while the Continental critics lost their heads over the invention of superlatives to describe the glamour and the greatness of the poems. Looking to the loose literary customs of the eighteenth century no convincing argument can be adduced from Macpherson's use of the word *translation*. It is necessary to remember the historic fact that in former times scribes and writers used the words *translation* and *transcription* with an easy freedom very shocking to modern antiquaries. All through the Middle Ages, down to quite recent times, few writers were troubled with that kind of literary conscience, and their readers did not expect it of them.

Some of his European admirers went the length of declaring Ossian to be the greatest epic poet of all time, greater even than Homer. Macpherson's translation was itself translated into half the languages of Europe. Even Goethe tried his hand, and incorporated extracts from Ossian in *WERTHER*: Schiller wrote enthusiastically of "the great nature of Ossian"; and Herder acknowledged the Gaelic poet as a source of inspiration. In

Italy the Abbé Cesarotti championed Macpherson against his English detractors. He placed Ossian on a level with Homer, if not above him. In reply to Johnson's taunt that Macpherson, and not Fingal, was the father of Ossian, the Abbé rejoined, "Whether Ossian was the son of Fingal or not, he was certainly the son of Apollo." In France (where three separate translations appeared) Cesarotti's Italian version became, it is said, the favourite reading of Napoleon.

It is generally thought that among British critics the most vehement opponent of Macpherson was Doctor Johnson. This is scarcely true. The most violent attack on the authenticity of the poems came from Lowland Scotland, where the native poets possessed prescriptive rights of flinging mud at Celtic bards. Dean Ramsay of Edinburgh has put it on record that Macpherson's *OSSIAN* was "universally damned," but it is to be presumed that those who commissioned the book were excepted. To prove its spurious character, Malcolm Laing searched with malicious minuteness for analogies. He found that Macpherson's translation was nothing but "a patchwork of plagiarism" made up of garbled quotations from Milton, Shakespeare, the Greek and Latin poets, and the Bible. As a monument of erudition Laing's book deserves a place beside the classic treatise of Zachary Bogan, in which are discovered three hundred and twenty closely-printed pages of coincidences between Homer and the Old Testament. At least one Presbyterian clergyman preached against the sinfulness of those persons who wasted their time in reading the exploits of the Fingalian heroes instead of studying "the faithful words of God." "James Macpherson," he told his congregation, "calls the Fingalian heroine a blue-eyed maiden. Brethren,

it is my firm conviction that the jade had been *fechtin'*."

The gentle art of literary controversy was cultivated to a fine point in the eighteenth century. The contemporary argument against the authenticity of the alleged discoveries was summarised with admirable lucidity by Pinkerton, the historian and antiquary. "The Celts," he wrote, "are of all savages the most deficient in understanding. Wisdom and ingenuity may be traced among the Samoyeds, Laps, and negroes, but, among Celts none of native growth. To say that a writer is a Celt is to say that he is a stranger to truth, modesty, and morality." Pinkerton is to be regarded as an expert witness in the case, being particularly well qualified to detect literary forgery. He had himself successfully passed off some of his own verses as ancient ballads purporting to be discovered in a manuscript of the sixteenth century. Another critic thought it would be easy to find among the Gaelic Highlanders "good specimens of the ape-idiot," but to look "among savages burrowing in middens" for epic poems was the height of folly.

Though not the most virulent, Doctor Johnson was certainly the most formidable of Macpherson's opponents. He threw all his influence into the scale against the poems: He uttered the dictum that "Gaelic was the rude speech of a barbarous people, who were content, as they conceived grossly, to be grossly understood." This argument, it is true, would have carried more weight if the Doctor had possessed an elementary acquaintance with the Gaelic language. There seemed to be nothing more to be said for the antiquity of the poems when Johnson laid it down that "there was not a Gaelic manuscript in the world one hundred years old, and there could be no polished language with-

out writing." And besides, whether ancient or modern, whether by Ossian or Macpherson, the poems were worthless; they were mere "bombast and fustian." It was "easy to abandon one's mind to write such stuff." Macpherson's reply to Johnson was to send a challenge to fight, couched, it is said, in the following elegant piece of Latinity:

Maxime, si tu vis, cupio contendere tecum.

The Doctor answered by purchasing a stout oak cudgel, and issuing an ultimatum in which he said, "I hope I shall never be deterred from detecting what I think a cheat by the menaces of a ruffian." Though Macpherson sulked in his tent and made no detailed reply to his critics and accusers, one of his backers kept up the spirit of the controversy by a retort in which he made a threefold classification of liars into ordinary liars, damned liars, and literary critics.

It is an old Saxon taunt that the Celts are never happy or at peace except when they are fighting. If that be so the publication of OSSIAN must have brought much peace and happiness to the Irish and Scottish branches of the Celtic people. Irish scholars made it a national grievance that Macpherson had claimed the Ossianic poems for Scotland. They contended, with much warmth of argument, that the translation was nothing but a freely mangled conglomeration of old Irish poems, songs, and tales. The recriminations that ensue when members of a family quarrel are not for the ears of strangers. But this much may be said, that there was at least a shadow of excuse for the facetious writer who summed up the argument of the Irish faction thus: "If there is anything of merit and originality in Macpherson's OSSIAN, then it is Irish; if not, it is Scottish." The question

whether the foundations of the Ossianic poems are Irish or Scotch, if pushed to an extremity, may easily degenerate into a quibble; as though one should debate whether, let us say, Longfellow is an American or an Anglo-Saxon writer. Ballads about the Fingalian heroes, of unknown antiquity and popularly attributed to OSSIAN, are necessarily common to both branches of the Gaels; just as stories of King Arthur and his knights are common to the Celts of Scotland, Wales, Cornwall, and Brittany. The Marquis of Wellesley became an unconscious partisan in the controversy. An old lady in London happened to read some parts of the book to him, when he suddenly exclaimed: "Why, I have heard all these stories before from my nurse in Ireland, who related them to me in the original Irish."

Outside this Scoto-Irish storm in a teacup, the great tempest continued to rage round Macpherson. Apart from political prejudice and racial animosity it may be said the English antipathy to the Ossianic poems rested on the popular conviction so forcibly expressed by Doctor Johnson, that "there was not a Gaelic manuscript in the world a hundred years old." It is true that darkness is everywhere,—to the blind. In this instance the perspicuous Doctor was the blind. Yet the fault was not altogether his own; the blindness was part of a cosmic process, a universal darkness. The melancholy fact is that in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries Europe lost its head over Guttenberg's invention. The literary men of that time made a fetish of the printed book, as so many do to-day. The old manuscripts were neglected or used to light fires, if too soiled to make sugar-bags. The wisdom locked up in ballads and other oral tradition was contemptuously dismissed as old wives' tales. Percy's *RELIQUES*, the famous

book which introduced English ballads into the world of reputable literature, was aptly christened. It was all that was left "of a large folio manuscript found lying on the floor under a bureau of the parlour, being used by the maids to light the fire." There was a manuscript book of Gaelic poetry at Douai which some think might have forestalled Macpherson if it had not been used by the students to light their pipes. The domestic servant who laid Mill's dining-room fire with the first volume of Carlyle's manuscript of *THE FRENCH REVOLUTION* would, therefore, have been in the best literary vogue if she had lived a century earlier. The kindest fate that could happen to a manuscript book in those days was for it to become concealed by dust in an unfrequented corner of a great library.

If for no other reason, James Macpherson would always be remembered as a collector of old manuscripts and traditional poems. He has a place among the few men of the eighteenth century whose sympathies were directed towards that literature of the people which lies outside printed books. It is no more than a coincidence, perhaps, that it was another Celt, Sir William Jones, whose introduction of Sanskrit to the scholars of Europe laid the foundation of scientific philology. Thanks to the scientific philologists, the Ossianic controversy has been lifted from the heated atmosphere of partisan declamation into the cool region of impartial enquiry. When systematic search was made (by the philologists, not by the literary men) it was found that ancient Celtic manuscripts were everywhere. In Dublin there are Celtic manuscripts in prose and verse, at least as old as the Middle Ages, enough to fill many hundred volumes. In the national libraries in Great Britain, it is estimated that if all

the unedited Celtic manuscripts were printed, they would fill at least twelve to fourteen hundred octavo volumes. There is an instructive anecdote which tells of the effect produced on Moore the Irish poet, by the sudden disclosure of these old literary treasures. Moore one day in 1839 called on O'Curry at the Royal Irish Academy, to talk about a book on the History of Ireland the poet was writing. He found O'Curry surrounded by a number of old Irish manuscripts. Struck by their venerable and imposing appearance Moore remarked: "These huge tomes could not have been written by fools or for any foolish purpose. I never knew anything about them before, and I had no right to have undertaken the History of Ireland." But he finished his history and published it all the same.

But Celtic manuscripts are not confined to Dublin. There are few important libraries in Europe that do not possess either Celtic manuscripts or Latin manuscripts glossed with Celtic words. And as every one knows, the *BOOK OF KELLS* (generally conceded to be the most beautiful book in the world), though in the Latin language, was penned and illustrated by Gaelic monks, probably before the tenth century of our era. In the library of Balliol College there is a Gaelic poem of the twelfth century, and among the Continental libraries where other manuscripts have been found are Milan, Wurtzberg, Berne, Carlsruhe, Copenhagen, and even as far away as Carinthia. Some of these were perhaps carried abroad by the early missionaries of the Celtic Christian Church in Britain, for it was the custom of the bard to follow in the wake of the missionary. Many undoubtedly were scattered on the Continent by the expulsion of monks from the monasteries during the various attempts made by the English to

civilise the Celtic fringe. The literary critics of the eighteenth century made up their minds that the language of the Celts was the last of the tongues of Europe to emerge from barbarism. The philologists of the nineteenth century have shown that the contrary is the fact. Among the Celts the vernacular speech was cultivated as a literary vehicle long before the Teutonic and Romance languages. In fact the present political insignificance of the remnants of the Celtic nations makes it hard to realise that this handful of peasants is in possession of a literature "which in the Middle Ages exerted an immense influence, changed the current of European imagination, and imposed upon almost the whole of Christianity its poetical motives." In Ireland there were schools where native poetry was rigorously and systematically studied as a fine art at the very time that the Teutonic barbarians were pulling the Roman Empire to pieces, and tossing babies on spears for amusement. Bede tells us that it was customary in the seventh century for many of the Saxon nobility in England to attend these Irish schools, and it is known that their fame drew many students from the Continent.

At the very time that Doctor Johnson uttered his famous dictum limiting the age of the oldest Gaelic manuscript to one hundred years, there was lying forgotten in London one which, if any person had taken the trouble to decipher and translate it, would have done more to settle the Ossianic controversy than all that was said by the combatants on either side. This was the manuscript known as *THE BOOK OF THE DEAN OF LISMORE*. Its history is that of so many other old writings, compiled with much care and labour, tossed into a den of lumber, the remnants rescued from rats and other irreverent beings

by some antiquary of the nineteenth century, and now valued by men at more than its weight in gold. THE BOOK OF THE DEAN OF LISMORE is a sort of commonplace book of Gaelic poetry, collected by one Sir James Macgregor who was Dean of Lismore in Argyleshire in the early part of the sixteenth century. In this old collection of popular and traditional Gaelic poetry there are nine poems (about one thousand lines), which bear this superscription: *The author of this is Ossian, the son of Fionn*. Now, though none of these poems is literally the same as anything in Macpherson's Ossian, yet the topics, the treatment, and the alleged authorship are the same. That is to say, a blind old bard, Ossian, the son of Fionn (or Fingal), despondently sings of the mighty achievements of the patriarchal heroes who lived and fought during his youth. There are no means of fixing the dates of these ballads but internal evidence tends to show that possibly they belong to the first century of the Christian era, and certainly are very much earlier than the sixteenth century, when the collection was made. The evidence of the Dean's Book thus proves two things. In the first place it proves that Macpherson had a mass of raw material in the shape of legendary ballads to work upon, and was therefore no mere literary impostor like poor Chatterton, such as Doctor Johnson and the Anglo-Scotch critics dubbed him. In the second place it proves the extreme improbability of the ballads having been forced into a continuous epic before the sixteenth century, or how did reference to it escape the Dean? The conclusion from this evidence is, therefore, that Macpherson's OSSIAN is modern in form but ancient in matter; that either Macpherson or some other Highland bard between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries

blended the different cycles of Ossianic ballads into one continuous narrative and threw it into the epic form. Professor Blackie was of opinion that we must look for the Gaelic Homer among the Highland bards of the early eighteenth century, before Macpherson's time; and he adduced many learned and ingenious arguments to establish this, though probably without convincing any one but himself. If it was Macpherson, as the majority of Celtic scholars agree, then of course he had no right to call FINGAL and the other poems a translation. But looking to the contemporary literary customs, few will be inclined to dispute the judgment of Doctor Skene (the most dispassionate of Celts), that Macpherson's fault in calling it a translation was a comparatively trivial one, and that the real blot on his fame was his subsequent conduct. When the antiquity of the matter, as well as the form of the poems, was disputed, Macpherson was weak and foolish enough to set about concocting a set of Gaelic originals, from which the English version purported to be translated. These were published after his death by his literary executor; that is to say, Ossian appeared in his own language after he had been printed in half the other languages of Europe. Doctor Skene calls this Gaelic version "a curious kind of mosaic constructed evidently with great labour afterwards, in which sentences, or parts of sentences, of genuine poems are cemented together in a very inferior word-paste of Macpherson's own."

By one of the curiosities of literary coincidences, it was in 1862, exactly one hundred years after the publication of FINGAL, that the BOOK OF THE DEAN OF LISMORE was made known to the world by means of the extracts and translations published by Doctors Skene and Maclachlan. But by this time the great Ossianic controversy

had dwindled almost to vanishing point. To the great mass of persons of education in Europe Ossian had become but the faint echo of a storm that had long blown itself asleep. Besides Gaelic scholars and Celtic enthusiasts there were few who took the trouble to form an opinion on the matter at all. Of these, some agreed with Wordsworth's verdict that "the spirit of Ossian was glorious, but Macpherson's OSSIAN was trash." Others sided with Macaulay, who, as trustee of the British Museum, refused to sanction the purchase of certain rare and invaluable Celtic manuscripts on the ground that "no Celtic manuscript was worth twopence halfpenny." Even among Highlanders the great Celtic bard, like the epic poets in Italy, found more champions than readers. A certain Italian gentleman, it is said, fought thirteen duels to establish the superiority of Tasso over Ariosto. In the thirteenth the champion of Tasso fell mortally wounded. As he lay dying he moaned, "And after all I have not read either of them"; whereto his opponent sympathetically replied, "Nor have I." Even so all good Highlanders are ready to fight for their favourite bard, but they do not read him; at least so said Professor Blackie.

This neglect is a strange fate for a book which cast a lasting ferment into the literature of Europe, and in regard to which many critics are agreed that no single work in British literature has had so wide-reaching, so potent, and so enduring an influence, as Mr. William Sharp puts it in the introduction to his charming book *LYRA CELTICA*. The full force of Matthew Arnold's powerful advocacy failed to immediately popularise Ossian

among educated men; but his pleadings and arguments did much to break down the old Saxon antipathy to all things Celtic. In his book on *THE STUDY OF CELTIC LITERATURE*, Arnold showed that one of the qualities which the English people admire most in some of their great poets is the very quality which above all others is the distinguishing characteristic of the Celtic bards, and that Ossian in particular is saturated and pervaded with the quintessence of this trait. To denote this characteristic trait of Celtic poetry Arnold used the word *Titanism*. No one has defined Titanism, but it has been caricatured in the saying, "The Celtic mind seems always sailing nowhere under full sail." Those who wished to know the full meaning of the word were recommended to discover it by devout study of Byron and Keats. "And where did they get it?" asks Arnold. "The Celts," he answers, "are the prime authors of this vein of piercing regret and passion, of this Titanism in poetry. A famous book, Macpherson's OSSIAN, carried in the last century this vein like a flood of lava through Europe. . . . Make the part of what is forged, modern, tawdry, spurious, in the book as large as you like, there will still be left a residue with the very soul of the Celtic genius in it, and which has the proud distinction of having brought this soul of the Celtic genius into contact with the genius of the nations of modern Europe, and enriched all our poetry by it. Woody Morven and echoing Lora and Selma with its silent halls, we all owe them a debt of gratitude, and when we are unjust enough to forget it, may the Muse forget us."

THE SPANISH MAIN.¹

MR. RODWAY has anticipated one of the chief objections to his book with so much candour that criticism may well feel itself disarmed. To narrate the events of four hundred stirring years within the compass of a single volume of less than four hundred pages is indeed a task to make the boldest pause. Nor were these limitations altogether a matter of choice. Mr. Rodway's book has been written for the series known as *THE STORY OF THE NATIONS*, and to the laws regulating that series he was necessarily forced to submit; to which circumstance must also, we presume, be attributed the fact of his pages being disfigured by some of the worst illustrations which an era of cheap devices and hasty work has as yet contrived to produce. And of dimensions proportionate to this imposing subject is its literature. From the *Decades* of Peter Martyr to the *Blue Book* issued the other day (if a *Blue Book* may rank as literature) stretches an array of volumes in many languages that it might puzzle a Heber to collect and a Macaulay to read. Nor would it be bounded by the domain of print. To treat the subject exhaustively it would be necessary to explore the archives not only of our own country but of Spain also and of Portugal, of Italy, France, and Holland. The story of the Spanish Main is indeed a story of the nations, for it would be hard to name one of the

great Powers of Europe that has not at some period during the last four centuries stretched out a hand to that famous apple of discord.

It would be unreasonable therefore to blame Mr. Rodway for having failed to achieve impossibilities. Every island and every province, as he says, has its own tale. It was inevitable that much should be left untold; and inevitable also, to use his own words, that every West Indian should find something missing, some event unmentioned which is of the greatest importance to his particular community. This discovery will extend beyond the West Indies. Every one whom study or curiosity or the love of gallant deeds has led to the subject will make his own comment. Every Englishman who has dipped into the volumes of Hakluyt or Purchas, or knows them only in the pages of Southey, Charles Kingsley, Mr. Froude or Mr. Payne, who has read what Humboldt and Irving, Sir Arthur Helps and Mr. Fiske have written, will think himself competent to play the critic to Mr. Rodway; and the more sternly he will be inclined to play it in proportion as his reading has lain more closely among the annals of that earlier time.¹ For

¹ A list of some of the principal works in English on this subject published during this century may perhaps be of service to our readers. Humboldt's *EXAMEN CRITIQUE* has not indeed been translated, so far as we know, but good English versions of the others are common and cheap. We have not included the numerous pamphlets and catalogues of Mr. Harris, nor the prodigious *NARRATIVE AND CRITICAL HISTORY OF AMERICA* edited by Mr. Justin Winsor, as, though containing much curious and interesting information on many subjects extracted with great industry from many quarters, they are, from their

¹ 1. *THE WEST INDIES AND THE SPANISH MAIN*; by James Rodway. London, 1896.

2. *DOCUMENTS AND CORRESPONDENCE RELATING TO THE QUESTION OF BOUNDARY BETWEEN BRITISH GUIANA AND VENEZUELA*; presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of Her Majesty, March, 1896.

it is on that side that Mr. Rodway's summary is most deficient. Perhaps he was right. He was forced to decide between ancient history and modern, and probably he was wise to give his preference to the latter. The purveyors of knowledge for the million must consult the tastes of the million, and those do not, we take it, as a rule care to stray too far from their own times and interests. By passing lightly over the operations of the sixteenth century Mr. Rodway has been enabled to spare more time to the

scope and form, rather works of reference than books to be read.

The True History of the Conquest of Mexico; by Captain Bernal Diaz del Castillo, one of the Conquerors, written in the year 1568 (translated by Maurice Keating).

A History of the Buccaneers of America; by Captain James Burney (vol. iv. of his *Voyages and Discoveries in the South Sea*).

Lives of British Admirals; by Robert Southey.

Life and Voyages of Columbus; by Washington Irving.

Voyages and Discoveries of the Companions of Columbus; by Washington Irving.

Examen Critique de l'Histoire de la Géographie du Nouveau Continent; by A. von Humboldt.

Cosmos; by A. von Humboldt (translated by E. C. Otte, vol. ii.).

Personal Narrative of Travels in the New Continent; by A. von Humboldt (translated by Thomasina Ross).

The Despatches of Hernando Cortes, the Conqueror of Mexico, addressed to the Emperor Charles V.; written during the Conquest (translated by George Folsom).

History of the Conquest of Mexico; by W. H. Prescott.

History of the Conquest of Peru; by W. H. Prescott.

The Spanish Conquest in America; by Sir Arthur Helps.

The Discovery of America; by John Fiske.

Drake; by Julian Corbett (from the series of *Men of Action*).

Voyages of the Elizabethan Seamen to America; by E. J. Payne.

History of the New World called America; by E. J. Payne.

English Seamen in the Sixteenth Century; by J. A. Froude.

To these may be added many of the volumes published by the Hakluyt Society, and the *Calendars of Colonial State Papers* (America and West Indies, 1574—1674) edited by the late Mr. Sainsbury.

operations of the nineteenth. The early discoverers, conquerors, and settlers make way for the politicians, philanthropists, and speculators of a later day; the exterminators of the Caribs are set aside in favour of the emancipators of the negro, and the dreams of M. de Lesseps take the place of the deeds of Balboa, Drake, and Morgan.

Mr. Rodway was right no doubt; yet we cannot but wish that he had dared to be wrong. It is not, of course, to be understood that he has altogether neglected these old heroes, though he has indeed ignored some who should certainly have had a place in his pages, if their title is to be taken as indicating their contents. But we wish that his scale of proportion had been different. We are partial and selfish, it will be said, and are grumbling because Mr. Rodway has not written to please us instead of some hundreds of more important folk. Perhaps, and yet we fancy some of our readers may be inclined to echo our complaint. Preach as he will, that stern and heavy-handed pedant whom we call the scientific historian, he will never eradicate from the general heart of man the consciousness of the romantic element in history and the love for it. Mr. Rodway is conscious of it, and loves it, we are persuaded, even as we do. "The shores of the Caribbean Sea," he writes, "have been the scene of marvellous adventures, of intense struggles between races and peoples, of pain, trouble, and disaster of almost every description. No wonder that the romance-writer has laid his scenes upon its beautiful islands and deep blue waters, for nowhere in the world, perhaps, he can find such a wealth of incident." In truth those three little words, the *Spanish Main*, are among the most eloquent in our language, and dull indeed must be the man in whom they can kindle no

spark of enthusiasm. As in the vision which the last of the bards beheld from Snowdon rises a shadowy procession of great figures who have written their names deep upon the page of history, and too often, it must be owned, in characters of blood. The noblest of them all leads the way, Columbus with his lofty brow and brooding eyes. Thick and fast they throng: Vasco Nuñez de Balboa, the discoverer of the Pacific Ocean, the man who knew not when he was beaten (*hombre que no sabia estar parado*); Ojeda and Nicuesa, rivals in accomplishments, in courage, in enterprise, and in misfortune; the bold Biscayan pilot Juan de la Cosa, who was looked up to by his comrades as an oracle of the sea, and Americus Vesputius, whose name an accident of fortune has made immortal beyond his deserts; the great Marquis of the Valley, Hernando Cortes, conqueror of Mexico, and Francisco Pizarro, conqueror of Peru; Gonçalez Davila who discovered Nicaragua, and Contrera, who conceived the magnificent design of making himself master of all the Main and monarch of the great South Sea, but who came no nearer to its accomplishment than taking Panama and losing his own head in return; Orellana who sailed down the Amazon from the Andes to the sea, and won undying fame through treacherously deserting his captain; and the Apostle of the Indies, the good and gentle Las Casas, in valour and endurance equal to any soldier of them all. The years pass and the scene widens. The English flag floats on the waters and English heretics profane the shores which God, so said the Vatican, had given to the Spaniard. The Englishman, who cared something, after his fashion, for God but not a jot for the Vatican, entirely declined to acquiesce in such an outrageous interpretation of the

divine decree. Led by John Hawkins and Francis Drake the Lutheran dogs swarmed into the golden seas, and knocked stoutly at the doors of the world's treasure-house. History has done them sometimes more and sometimes less than justice. Their courage, stoutness, sagacity, and seamanship it is indeed impossible to rate too highly. Cruel, with rare exceptions, they never were; the Indians hailed them as deliverers wherever they came, and even the Spaniards acknowledged them for gallant and generous enemies. But they were not quite perhaps the God-fearing, unselfish patriots that figure in Kingsley's and Froude's pages; while assuredly they were something much more and better than the greedy and unscrupulous pirates of a later imagination. To class such men as Drake and Frobisher and Davis, Cumberland, Grenville, and Raleigh with the Buccaneers of the next century, argues either a woeful ignorance or a wilful misunderstanding of history. And even the Buccaneers themselves, the true Brethren of the Coast, not the common cut-throats of a later time, played their part in the great drama; a bloody and brutal part it too often was, but one of which the true importance has not perhaps been fully recognised. Here, as will sometimes happen, the romance of history has overlaid its significance; yet those privateers who, under secret commission, harried the Spaniard out of his gold and his wits during the latter half of the seventeenth century, added in their way an important chapter to our colonial history. There was little in common between the two men save courage and sagacity; nevertheless the same work which Drake begun in 1572 when he picked the lock of the new world at Nombre de Dios, was still in progress when a hundred years later Morgan led his men across the Isthmus of Darien to

sack the city of Panama. The motives which inspired the two men may not have been the same. It is possible that love of country had no great share in Morgan's actions, and that all religions were much the same to him. He was, as he confessed in the later days of his respectability, a man of the pike rather than of the book. But to probe men's motives after the lapse of two or three centuries must always be hazardous work. What they did the historian can tell; why they did it he can only guess. It is at least certain that in the seventeenth century Morgan and his men helped to break the power of Spain in the Caribbean Sea, as Drake and his men had helped to break it in the sixteenth century; and judged by the strict law of nations, the acts of both are equally indefensible. The two nations were ostensibly at peace when Drake sacked Carthage in 1586; they were at peace when Morgan sacked Panama in 1671. But the old fore-castle theory that there could be no peace within the tropical line was in deed, if not in word, as steadfastly maintained in the sixteenth as in the seventeenth century; and it is well for England, and well for the world, that it was so. Nursed in traditions of order, and with nothing to gain by disregarding them, we may shake our heads at it all now. The world has gained in politeness what it has lost in patriotism: men respect the law more if they fear God less: and nations, when they mean fighting now, are as precise and punctilious in the preliminaries as Monsieur Jourdain's fencing-master. War, which Erasmus, were he to revisit the earth, would no longer call the malady of princes, is a terrible thing; but not in our time, nor in the time of our children's children, will arbitration take its place. When diplomacy

has said its last word, and failed, there will always remain the arbitrament of the sword. The old way was rough and ready, illegal, barbarous, what you please; but it was wondrously effective. Men fought first and arbitrated afterwards; and the man who had proved himself strongest pronounced the award. That is what it really came to. While the men of affairs were writing and wrangling in the cabinets and councils of the old world, the men of action were doing their work for them in the seas and on the shores of the new world. It was Doctor Arnold's creed that the standard of human morality has been one and the same from the beginning of time, and that men of every age and every country must be judged only by the eternal laws of right and wrong. It is a more convenient creed for the churchman than the historian. There are indeed offences which, in Coleridge's phrase, are offences against the good manners of human nature itself; and it may be granted that the man who committed such offences in the reign of Nebuchadnezzar was as guilty as the man who should commit them in the reign of Victoria. That such offences were committed by some of the earlier Spanish conquerors cannot be disputed, though it seems no less certain that Las Casas and the English writers who followed his lead have greatly exaggerated their number and enormity; they were rare, there is every reason to believe, among the early English adventurers, but in the next century there was no Drake to keep order and no Raleigh to entreat kindness. For such offences Spaniard and Englishman, Frenchman, Italian, and Hollander are all equally culpable. But for the rest, whatever moralist or historian may say, it would have fared ill not with England only, nor with all that we mean by the progress of the world, but with the general cause

of humanity, had there never been a moment in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries when right gave way to might.

The philanthropist will not of course agree with Robertson in calling the discovery and early settlement of America a splendid story; and it must in truth be owned that there are many dark stains upon its splendour. But it is one which in the sterner qualities of daring, courage, and endurance it would be hard to match in the annals of the human race; and we cannot but think that Mr. Rodway might, even within the small space at his disposal, have made more of it than he has. To take but one instance of omission; he has nowhere even mentioned the name of Balboa. Now Balboa, after Columbus and Cortez, unquestionably plays the finest part in what one may call the first act of the great drama. If his magnificent enterprise in discovering the great South Sea were not enough to give him a place in Mr. Rodway's pages, he should at least have been remembered for his government of Darien, in which he showed not only the fighting qualities common to all the early conquerors, but a measure of sagacity, prudence, and humanity that was certainly not common. For the historian of Elizabeth's reign to omit from his pages the name of Francis Drake would be hardly more surprising than for the historian of the Spanish Main to omit the name of Vasco Nuñez de Balboa.

And this brings us to a matter which has always puzzled us, and which Mr. Rodway has done nothing to elucidate. We write and talk glibly enough of the Spanish Main, but when did the phrase first come into use and what was its exact geographical significance? The prevalent idea, borrowed, we take it, from the delightful romance of WESTWARD

Ho!, seems to be that the phrase was in common use among the Elizabethan sailors to signify that part of the great American continent on which the Spaniards had effected a settlement when we first broke into the Caribbean Sea; that is to say, from Vera Cruz in the Gulf of Mexico to the delta of the Orinoco. But we cannot find that the phrase was in use at that time. In the pages of Hakluyt we read of *the Main*, of *the Firm Land* (which is of course a literal translation of the Spanish term *Tierra Firme*), of *the Mainland Coast*, of *the Coast of the Indies* or of *the West Indies*; but of *the Spanish Main* we have nowhere read. Nor have we been able to find it in the writers of the next century. Dampier does not use it, nor Lionel Wafer, nor the translator of Exquemelin's *DE AMERICAENSCH ZEE-ROOVERS*; it is not to be found in Morgan's official reports of his buccaneering exploits, nor in Ringrose's narrative, nor in Sharp's. In the map engraved for Dampier's *VOYAGES* (1729) the term *Firm Land* is employed to designate the territory now occupied by the Republics of Venezuela and Colombia. The original *Tierra Firme* of the Spaniards, according to Ulloa, included only the provinces of Veragua, Panama, and Darien, with the city of Panama for its capital. We may be in error, and certainly we do not profess that our researches have been exhaustive; but the earliest use we have found of the term *the Spanish Main* is in *THE JOURNAL OF ADMIRAL JAMES*, lately published by the Navy Records Society, where on November 12th, 1779, the Admiral notes that he "bore away for Truxillo on the Spanish Main," Truxillo being the port of Honduras. In the supplementary volume containing the maps and illustrations for the new edition of Bryan Edward's

HISTORY OF THE BRITISH WEST INDIES (published in 1818-19) the terms Terra Firma and Spanish Main are both used; the former marking much the same extent of territory that is included in the Firm Land of Dampier's map, while the latter appears to signify only the coast-line extending from the Mosquito Gulf to Cape la Vela. To this day people in the islands speak always of the Main, and the Main only.

There is no doubt that the Spanish Main was an elastic phrase often vaguely used in our own century to include the Caribbean Archipelago as well as the mainland. But we doubt, with all respect to Mr. Rodway, whether it was ever stretched so far as to include the three provinces of Guiana. Mr. Rodway has lived in British Guiana and written an interesting book on it; and this may possibly account for his devoting some of his scanty space to a portion of territory which, unless we are altogether mistaken, does not properly come within his province at all.

But whatever its exact territorial significance, or whenever the phrase first came into general use, as to its origin there can be no doubt. An ingenious gentleman has indeed derived *main* from the Spanish word *manea*, a shackle or fetter, holding it to signify the West Indian islands, which link, as it were, the mainland of Florida to the mainland of Venezuela. This remarkable interpretation is supported by a quotation from Bacon: "We turned conquerors and invaded the main of Spain." It would have been difficult to call a more inconvenient witness. What Bacon really wrote was, "In 1589 we turned challengers, and invaded the main of Spain;" and his reference was of course to the expedition which Drake and Norreys led against the coasts of Portugal, then a province of Spain,

in reprisal for Philip's great Armada of the previous year. The misplaced ingenuity of this interpretation almost, it must be said, finds a parallel in Mr. Rodway's own pages. The second title of Mr. Froude's delightful book, *THE ENGLISH IN THE WEST INDIES*, is, as everybody knows, *THE BOW OF ULYSSES*, which Mr. Rodway supposes to have much the same significance as the *manea* or *main* of our clever friend aforesaid. But if he had taken the trouble to refresh his memory with a peep at page fifteen of Mr. Froude's book, he would have been spared this rather unfortunate mistake. The English *main* is but the old French *magne*, which is in its turn the Latin *magnus*. It signifies the mainland, the great continent as distinguished from the islands; just as, when applied to the sea, it signifies the great ocean as distinguished from smaller expanses of water.

Such as it was, the Spanish Main was discovered by Columbus on his third voyage. The territories now known as Venezuela and British Guiana had been discovered, so the new Blue Book informs us, before the year 1520. This caution is unnecessary; the exact date is perfectly well known. Columbus sighted the island to which from its three mountain peaks he gave the name of Trinidad on July 31st, 1498; and on the following day he caught his first glimpse of the continent in the lowlands which form the delta of the Orinoco. He at first supposed them to be a continuation of the Caribbean Archipelago, nor was it till he encountered the strong current running into the Gulf of Paria from the mouths of the Orinoco, and noticed the curious discoloration of the sea, that he realised the full importance of his discovery. No island, he said, could feed a river or rivers capable of discharging so vast a volume of water. He must

have reached the shores of some huge continent laid down on no map and as yet undreamed of by mortal man. On passing out of the gulf he turned to the west and sailed along the coast as far as the islands of Margarita and Cubagua, collecting from the kindly natives a good store of the pearls with which those waters abound. And ever as he sailed the land stretched away on his left hand, westward far as the eye could see; a fair coast with many good harbours, and in the background a lofty range of mountains. But the great Admiral's bodily strength could endure no more. Racked with gout and fever, and almost blind, he turned his ship's head to the north-west and steered across the open sea for Hispaniola, proposing to send his brother Bartholomew back to continue his discoveries, while he recruited his health on shore. What happened on his arrival at the island is no part of our present story. For two weary years he and his brother laboured to restore order among a greedy and mutinous rabble; and when he did at last reach Spain it was, to the everlasting disgrace of the Spanish nation, as a prisoner in irons.

Meanwhile the liveliest curiosity was rife at the Court in Granada. The pearls, which Columbus had sent home with his despatches and the charts of his voyage, seemed an earnest of the teeming riches which his sanguine imagination attributed to the new coast. There was at that time idling about the Court a young adventurer whose name has been already mentioned, Alonzo de Ojeda. Brought up in the household of the Duke of Medina Celi, he had followed his patron to the Moorish Wars, had sailed with Columbus on his second voyage, and though still quite young had already earned a name for daring and enterprise.

Through his intimacy with Bishop Fonseca, head of the Council for the Indies, he had acquired access to all the particulars of the new discovery; and that malignant prelate, the Admiral's lifelong enemy, lent a ready ear to his suggestions that he should be entrusted to reap the rich harvest left ungathered by Columbus. It is probable that Ferdinand and Isabella were ignorant of this violation of the privileges granted in their original agreement with the Admiral of the Ocean. At any rate Ojeda's commission was signed by Fonseca alone; and he knew well that if the result of the voyage proved beneficial to the royal treasury Ferdinand at least would ask no inconvenient questions. No one will be disappointed to learn that the voyage was not successful. Neither gold nor pearls were found, and a cargo of slaves barely sufficed to pay the cost of the expedition. But a considerable addition was made to the geography of the new continent. The first land sighted (June, 1599) was that now known as Surinam, or Dutch Guiana, some two hundred leagues south of that made by Columbus in the previous year; while the coast was explored northward as far as Cape la Vela, about one hundred and fifty leagues beyond his farthestmost point. It was while in the Gulf of Maracaibo that Ojeda, observing how the houses of the natives were built on piles driven into the water, gave to the place the name of Venezuela, or Little Venice, which the whole province bears to this day.

It may have been only an excess of caution which determined the historian of the British Government to leave so ample a margin in the matter of these early dates; in certain other matters, and in certain other dates also, the determining element would appear to have been rather a defi-

ciency of knowledge. We do not know who is responsible for the historical introduction to the Blue Book; but it certainly lacks the precision one expects from a work bearing the stamp of a Government. It does not appear to have occurred to the writer that, when in 1580 the Dutch first began to establish themselves on the coast of Guiana, they were Spanish subjects. They were fighting, it is true, for their independence; but they had not yet won it, nor indeed were they as yet even united in their struggle for freedom. A subject nation does not become free in a day by merely renouncing its allegiance. So long as Holland was even in theory a province of Spain, whatever territory she acquired in any part of the world could by the law of nations be held only for the Spanish crown. The children of slaves could not be born free. The independence of the Netherlands was acknowledged by Spain in 1609. The official historian assigns the acknowledgment to 1648, when the Thirty Years' War was closed by the Treaty of Munster, or the Treaty of Westphalia as it is more commonly called. But he forgets, and it is curious that, so far as we have seen, nobody has reminded him of the Twelve Years' Truce which was signed between Spain and the States-General of the United Provinces in 1609. The basis and backbone of that truce, over which the Commissioners had been wrangling for three years, was that Spain should treat with her rebellious subjects as with a free people. "Recognition of our sovereignty," said Prince Maurice, "is the foundation-stone of these negotiations;" and though he and John Barneveld had long parted company on most points, they were agreed on this. It was a bitter pill for the

haughty Spaniard to swallow; but the Dutch burghers stood firm. The treaty was signed at Antwerp on April 9th, 1609, first by the Ambassadors of the Kings of France and Great Britain as mediators, and then by the deputies of the Archdukes and of the States-General. The first article was to this effect: That the Archdukes declared, as well in their own name as that of the King, that they were content to treat with the Lords the States-General of the United Provinces in quality of, and as holding them for, countries, provinces, and free states, over which they pretended to nothing. Another article declared that each party should remain seized of their respective possessions, and be not troubled therein by the other party during the truce. It is true that the war was renewed in the year following the expiration of the truce, but it was waged then on a different footing. Spain might solace her wounded dignity by professing to be occupied once again in chastising her rebellious subjects; but the Powers of Europe recognised that the war was now between the Kingdom of Spain and the Republic of the United Provinces. The birth of Dutch independence dates not from the year 1648 but from the year 1609.

However, these facts do not, we presume, affect the matter at issue between Great Britain and Venezuela; nor do they come strictly within the scope of this article. Here, for the present, we must part from Mr. Rodway, and we part, on our side, in all good will. If we have been compelled to join issue with him on some few points, at least we owe him a debt of gratitude for the opportunity of renewing our acquaintance with one of the most stirring and romantic, and certainly not one of the least important, chapters in the Story of the Nations.

THOMAS HUGHES.

ON March 25th was buried quietly at Brighton the body of one whom all that knew him, and many who did not, spoke of and thought of as Tom Hughes.

The mind of the present writer runs back thirty years, and he recalls his excitement and joy when, as a boy, he first saw the author of *TOM BROWN'S SCHOOL DAYS* in the flesh. He had come to see his son; and his son's schoolfellow remembers how he wrote an extra letter to his home that week giving accurate details of the hero's height, complexion, hair (of this, even in those days, there was not much), his look, his voice. The voice was heard at the boys' Debating Society trouncing a profane young Tory who did not speak of Mr. Gladstone with the respect due to so good and great a man; during the last decade the voice, we may observe, altered somewhat on that topic.

Tom Hughes was just the man to join a boys' debate; he was a boy himself in all essentials to the very end. The title-page of his famous book records that it was written by an Old Boy; and that is precisely what he was. In a recent letter to a young and unknown correspondent in America, he styled himself an old boy of seventy-three. One of the wisest women who ever knew him well called him Master Tom; and Master Tom in certain ways he always was.

No one could have written *TOM BROWN'S SCHOOL DAYS* who had not the heart of a boy; and coming from the heart of one boy it entered into the hearts of thousands. "Let it be published," said his old friend Septimus

Hansard on seeing the manuscript, "it will be *the* book for all future Public School boys." Rugby knows what he did for cricket and all games. He so loved all manly sports that he loathed the gambling which has come to be so closely connected with too many of them. One of his last public appearances at Chester (where he was a Judge of County Courts) was as the opponent of the National Sporting League. He loved to confront the strong, as his schoolfellow Arthur Stanley loved to befriend the weak.

In Parliament he was a Radical at a time when Radicalism was not the popular and paying creed that it has been sometimes since, but he found it a "heart-breaking place." It may be a good place for the man who only wants to belong to what has been called the best club in London, or who has axes of his own to grind and advertisements of himself to publish, but not a cheerful home for a man of moral fervour, a man who wants to see some wrong righted, some good work done. Of Co-operation he was a pioneer, and stood much storm and stress in its early days, to the no small loss of patrimony. That he bore as a boy might; but when the better days came and his former colleagues waxed fat and kicked, behaved, that is to say, much like other capitalists, he waxed wroth and sad. At one time he was a bit of a Chartist, and joining Kingsley, in the days of Parson Lot, he became the hero of the working men, who in due time carried him, so to say, shoulder-high into Parliament; but when they found him to be no

delegate, and saw that in that ample, well-poised head he could carry two ideas and see two sides in some questions, they turned against him and desired another king, some one to represent their narrowness with more fidelity.

As in the State, so in the Church, his breadth of mind was not acceptable. Of his devotion to the Church none who read or heard his words could entertain a doubt; but when, in answer to an invitation, he spoke at a Church Congress some years ago, he was howled at by the bigots of both parties. He preferred Christianity to Churchmanship, and, though fond of faith, thought with Saint Paul that there was something to be said for hope and love. He had no objection to a fight; but, not thinking a Church Congress the best place for one, he did not speak at such gatherings again.

He was for many years a volunteer, inspiring enthusiasm and making friends there as elsewhere. In the army he had two brothers, and to it he sent a son. He was all for outdoor life, at least in theory; of late years he did not take much air or exercise, though he loved the sun to the last, and was about to seek it in Italian skies when he died. His love of outdoor life led him to send two sons out to the prairies of America, and perhaps was partly responsible for the ill-fated scheme of Rugby, Tennessee. Young men were to combine the beauty of work with the sweetness of home; going out with their own sisters they were in due time to exchange their society for that of other people's sisters. The scheme failed dismally, but the Old Boy never acknowledged, to others at least, that it was more than premature. That scheme recalls America, to which he often went and where he was almost worshipped. He was an ardent Northerner thirty years ago, and his letters to *THE SPECTATOR*,

recently reprinted as *VACATION RAMBLES*, show what he felt about America and what he said there in 1870. A recent letter to *THE TIMES* from a friend tells us how keen a Northerner he was, and how he lectured that writer on the subject without waiting to discover that he was "preaching to the converted;" that, too, was just like him to the last.

These rambling words, let us here say, make no pretence to tell the story of his life; they only try to show how full of interest and of interests he was. He touched life at so many points, and had so many friends, to say nothing of the thousands who seemed to know him and to love him through his books.

If any one wished to see him angry, he might have been recommended to talk flippant scepticism; to see him bored, nothing was so effective as an allusion to his books, especially to *TOM BROWN'S SCHOOLDAYS*. He was absolutely devoid of vanity, conceit, or literary spite; he did much to make Lowell's books popular in England, and to the very last was appreciative of the humblest effort in the literary line, never stamping upon the smoking flax.

He had two human masters, Doctor Arnold and F. D. Maurice; these were the mainsprings of his life. The teaching of the latter he carried to the Working Men's College, where he did much for a long time, and of which he was for eleven years principal. There lies near us an address presented to him on his resigning that position in 1883.

Of the Co-operative Congress he was elected chairman in 1866, as is testified by a large mug adorned by a terrible picture of that official. Of the Crystal Palace also he was chairman. For many years his face was familiar in the best society in London, using the adjective in no fashionable

sense. Personages may have been refreshed to meet a man who was too much of a boy to approach them with bent back or bated breath. The author of *THE BOOK OF SNOBS*, it may be observed, was one of his closest friends. Most of his early intimates, such as Septimus Hansard and Matthew Arnold, had gone before him, but Dean Bradley, the Reverend John Llewelyn Davies, and Mr. J. M. Ludlow, to name three only, yet remain. Looking back on his whole life, one is moved to say of him what he said of his brother George (in his charming *MEMOIR OF A BROTHER*) and of Theodore Walrond, that he did much to keep the atmosphere of life clean and sweet about him. He was essentially a wholesome and a manly man. *THE MANLINESS OF CHRIST* is, some think, one of the most attractive of his books.

He had his oddities, his limitations, but they need not be mentioned here. He loved, as he expressed it, to "sit at home in his own mind," and a roomy, well-furnished place to sit in it was. His memory was marvellous, not for details of daily life, but for long passages of poetry, odds and ends, quaint Berkshire stories, with which he would illustrate and illumine passing topics. A talker he was not, save in an interjectional, exclamatory or declamatory fashion, at least in later years. His imaginative power was so great that he fancied he disliked the daily and weekly papers. As a fact, few people were fonder of them or read them

with greater assiduity; and though he may have liked "staying in his own mind" he was also fond of travel in foreign countries, as may be seen from his letters sent to *THE SPECTATOR* under the signature *Vacuum Viator*, from 1862 to 1895, and republished, as has been said, last year.

His liberality was wonderful. Until the letters addressed to him fell into other hands, no one knew how many asked help of him, and got it. He was not always wise in this matter; his boyish trustfulness being in this, as in some other things, his bane. He believed almost any story, recognised fictitious claims, gave large sums, forgot that he had given, and therefore gave again. Such a man, such a boy, wanted some one by him to shield, support, and cheer him, for though cheery he was not always cheerful; some one full of sympathy, courage, common sense; some one to see things as they are; some one to attend to the small things of life, and not only to the panaceas, the great schemes. Those who knew Tom Hughes know, and those who did not may be glad to hear, that such a friend he had.

He has gone from us and left a gap in the world, in many hearts, in many homes. His words and deeds have helped to make some idle men useful citizens and some old men feel young; his sunny face and cheery greeting have brightened many lives. If some forgot him, Rugby did not, but wished to have his body buried at the school that he loved and served so well.